

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **ZONING ORDINANCE MAP AMENDMENT** to change in the designation of 71 Shelton Avenue and 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue from Industry H District – Heavy Industry (IH) to Residential General High Density District (RH-2).

REPORT: 1678-06

ADVICE: Approval

PROJECT ADDRESSES:

- 71 Shelton Avenue (MBLU: 284 0392 02700)
- 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue (MBLU: 284 0392 00101)

APPLICANT/OWNER:

Applicant: Elm City Lofts, LLC

Owners:

- 71 Shelton Avenue - ZSY DEVELOPMENT LLC; Shneur Katz
- 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue - NEW HAVEN BUSINESS CENTER LLC; Shneur Katz

SUBMISSION:

This petition for this ordinance amendment was dated for and received at the January 5, 2026, Board of Alders meeting. Legistar File ID: OR-2026-0002. The submission included:

- Cover Letter
- Attachment A: Petition for Zoning Map Amendment
- Attachment B: Proposed Ordinance for Zoning Map Amendment
- Attachment C: Existing and Proposed Zoning Maps
- Attachment D: Legal Description of Parcels to be Released Filing Fee

BACKGROUND AND PARCEL HISTORY

The site of the proposed zone change comprises two (2) parcels totaling approximately 4.9 acres in the Newhallville neighborhood and bounded by 99 Shelton Avenue to the north, the discontinued Argyle Street to the south, the Farmington Canal Greenway to the east and Shelton Avenue to the west. In regard to nearby zoning districts, the site is adjacent to the Science Park complex Planned Development District (PDD 49) to the east, the RH-2 zone to the south, and RM-2 to the west and north.

As stated above, ZSY DEVELOPMENT LLC currently owns certain real property located in the City of New Haven commonly known as 71 Shelton Avenue (MBLU: 284 0392 02700). NEW HAVEN BUSINESS CENTER LLC currently owns certain real property located in the City of New Haven commonly known as 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue (MBLU: 284 0392 00101).

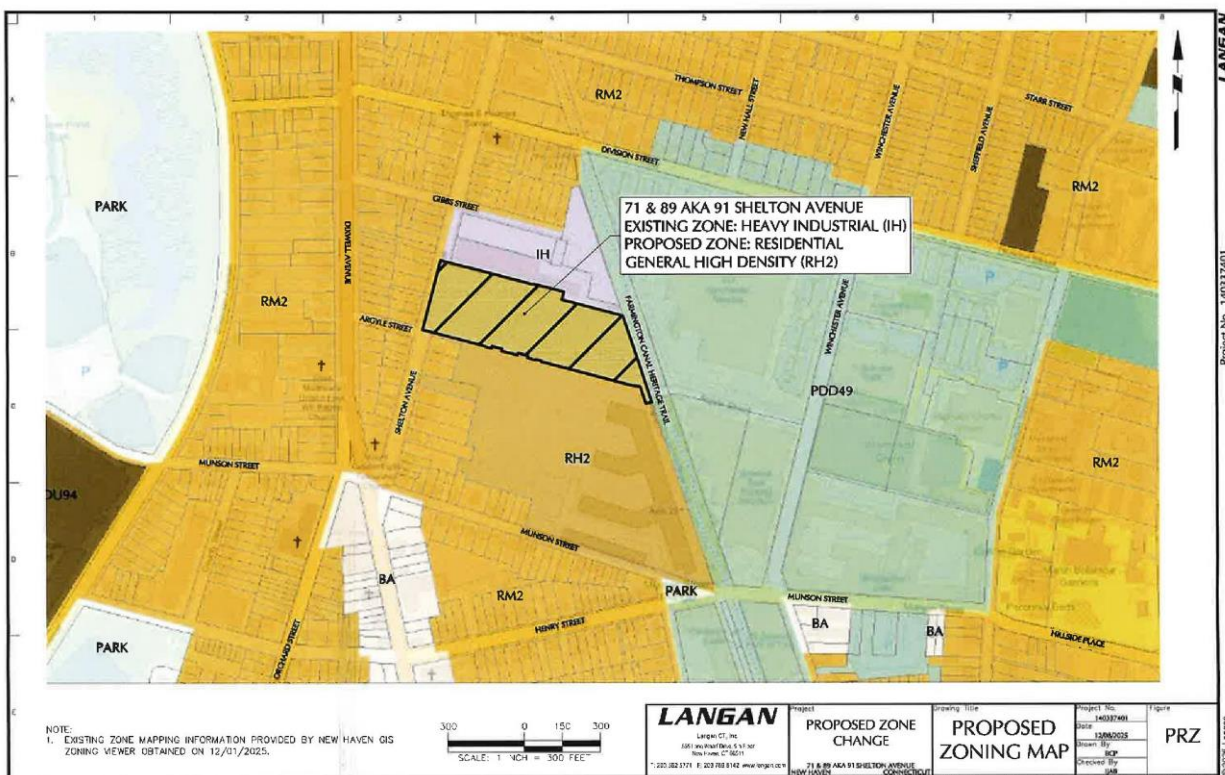


Figure 1. Proposed Zoning Map

IH Zone in Newhallville - History

The structures at 71 and 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue were built in 1915 as part of the World War I factory expansion of the Winchester Repeating Arms Company factory complex, possibly used for offices and storage at the time. From the mid-1950s to the early 1970s, the now-demolished building at 71 Shelton Avenue was used by the U.S. Department of Energy for nuclear research. The contamination at the site has since been cleaned up and following the 2021 demolition of the structure and clean-up of the site, the land can be used without any restrictions.

The structure at 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue was remediated to commercial standards in 2008 and currently houses City Climb Gym as well as offices, art and music studios. There is an Environmental Land Use Restriction (ELUR) on the property, which disallows residential use. The property owner will need to work with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) to develop an appropriate remediation plan for the site in order to release or modify the ELUR before it can be developed for residential use. This remediation plan requirement does not preclude rezoning of the property from an industrial zone to a residential zone but is a factor of the site for the commission to keep in consideration. The site has received a conditional grant commitment for \$6,000,000 for the remediation of the site from the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), with one of the conditions being a change of zoning from a heavy industry zone to a residential zone.

Previous CPC Actions at 71 Shelton Avenue:

- **CPC 1561-04:** Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Review for off-site removal and disposal of building debris and contaminated soil from the former United Nuclear Corporation (UNC) Naval Products Facility in a RM-2 zone. Approved September 18, 2019.
- **CPC 1392-08:** Land Disposition of 71 Shelton Avenue from the City of New Haven to ZSY Development LLC; Shneur Katz. Approved July 19, 2006.

Previous CPC Actions at 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue:

- **CPC 1645-03:** Site plan review for conversion of an existing building to self-storage units, and associated site improvements, with community amenity space on the ground floor, in the IH zone. Applicant: Diamond Point Development, LLC; Agent: Carolyn Kone, Brenner, Saltzman & Wallman LLP. Denied without prejudice February 21, 2024.
- **CPC 1645-01:** Special Permit for a self-storage facility in the IH zone. Applicant: Diamond Point Development, LLC; Agent: Carolyn Kone, Brenner, Saltzman & Wallman LLP. Denied without prejudice February 21, 2024.
- **CPC 1580-02:** Special Permit for replacement of nine (9) antennas and six (6) remote radio heads (“RRHs”) on an existing wireless telecommunications facility on the roof of an industrial building in an IH zone. Applicant: Cellco Partnership d/b/a Verizon Wireless. Approved with conditions February 17, 2021.
- **CPC 1543-07:** Special Permit for replacement of 6 antennas and 6 remote radio heads (“RRHs”) and installation of 3 new RRHs. Applicant: New Haven Business Center, LLC. Approved with conditions April 18, 2018.
- **CPC 1492-07:** Special Permit for wireless telecommunications facility. Applicant: Sandy Carter of Cellco. Approved May 21, 2014.
- **CPC 1427-A:** Environmental Land Use Restriction (ELUR). Land records filing communicated to the CPC April 22, 2009.
- **CPC 1426-10:** Special Permit for Telecommunications Facility. Applicant: Youghioghenny Comm NE/Pocket. Approved with Conditions March 18, 2009.
- **CPC 1425-01:** Special Permit for Addition of New Equipment to Existing Telecommunications Facility in an IH Zone. Applicant: Omnipoint (T-Mobile) Communications. Approved with Conditions February 18, 2009.
- **CPC 1389-01:** Special Permit to locate a Wireless Telecommunications Facility in an IH Zone. Applicant: Omnipoint (T-Mobile) Communications. Approved with Conditions May 17, 2006.
- **CPC 1382-04:** SESC Review for Soil Remediation Project in an IH Zone. Applicant: Olin Corp. Approved with Conditions January 18, 2006.

PROPOSED ZONING – RH-2 District— Residential General High Density District

The applicant proposes to rezone 2 parcels, approximately 4.9 acres, from the Heavy Industry (IH) zone to the Residence – General High Density (RH-2) zone.

As stated in Article III, Section 16 of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance, the RH-2 Zoning districts “*exist for the protection of areas that have been and are being developed predominately for high density dwellings, commonly apartment houses and other dwellings with a high ratio of*

floor area to land area. Accordingly, the use of land and buildings within these areas is limited to dwellings meeting a Floor Area Ratio designed for a density ranging from 22 to 74 dwellings units per acre and to such non-residential uses as generally support and harmonize with a high density area. The non-residential uses permitted in RH-2 Districts, subject to adequate conditions and safeguards, are hereby found and declared to be the only appropriate such uses for such areas. It is hereby found and declared, further, that these regulations are necessary to the protection of these areas and that their protection is essential to the maintenance of a balanced community of sound residential areas of diverse types.”

Zoning Table – Comparison of Bulk, Yard, Density, and Parking Regulations

This table demonstrates the differences between the existing IH zone and the proposed RH-2 zone.

Standard	IH Existing Zoning	RH-2 Proposed Zoning
Minimum Lot Area per Dwelling Unit	N/A – Dwelling Units Not Permitted	N/A
Maximum Building Coverage	N/A	50%
Maximum Gross Floor Area (Floor Area Ratio – FAR)	4.0	2.0
Minimum Front Yard	N/A	5 ft
Minimum Side Yard	None, with exceptions ¹	0 ft
Minimum Rear Yard	10 ft for a building wall having an average height of 30 ft or less 1 ft for each 3 ft of average height for a building wall having an average height of more than 30 feet	20 ft
Maximum Building Height	No direct limit	No direct limit
Minimum Off-Street Parking Space	One per two employees on the largest shift	0.75 spaces per dwelling unit (304 spaces proposed)
Minimum Open Space per Dwelling Unit	N/A – Dwelling Units Not Permitted	125 sq ft

Notes

1. Except that in any case where a side yard is actually provided such side yard shall be required to be not less than five feet for a building wall having an average height of 20 feet or less, and not less than one foot for each four feet of average height for a building wall having an average height of more than 20 feet. (Section 43(h)(2)).

Zoning Table – Comparison of Relevant Use Regulations

Use	IH	RH-2
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Dwelling Units	Not Permitted	Permitted As-of-Right
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PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing was held by the City Plan Commission on February 25, 2026. A transcript of the hearing, meeting #1678, will be available from the City Plan Department.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The former Winchester Repeating Arms complex has been in a transitional period from heavy industry to mixed-use and high-density housing for nearly a decade and this proposed map amendment follows this trend. In fact, in the 2017 staff report (CPC #1538-03) for the zone change of the adjacent 201 Munson Street from IH to RH-2, staff and the commission raised concerns about the future of the remaining 4+ acres of IH District and recommended that staff “pursue efforts to incorporate this area into an adjacent RM-2 District.” While this zoning map amendment calls for a change to expand the RH-2 zone rather than the RM-2 zone, the intent and chosen district for this rezoning aligns with those prior staff considerations of a need to support a transition to a middle-to-high density residential condition for the area.

The development proposal from Elm City Lofts, LLC that triggers this need for a zoning map amendment would result in 240 units of affordable multifamily housing at or below 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI) with 48 of those units restricted at or below 50% AMI. The project is an adaptive reuse of the former laboratory building at 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue using historic tax credits, along with construction of two new residential buildings.

The last proposal for this site was in 2024, when storage units were proposed for 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Ave. The commission denied the Special Permit (CPC #1645-01) and Site Plan Review (CPC #1645-03) for this proposal without prejudice over concerns about the application’s adherence to the City’s Plan of Conservation and Development (Vision 2025). In particular the Commission raised concerns that self-storage would not align with revitalization goals in the neighborhood. This was coupled with significant public testimony against the proposed self-storage use. The Commission also compared the site to other industrial areas around the city that were remediated for residential use, and contemplated such a future for this site. This vision is coming to fruition with the applicant applying for a zoning map amendment and tax abatement from the city as the first steps towards building a dense residential development that includes affordable housing.

As stated previously in this report, there is an Environmental Land Use Restriction (ELUR) on the property at 89 a/k/a/ 91 Shelton Avenue, which disallows residential use. The property owner will need to develop an appropriate remediation plan for the site in order to release or modify the ELUR before it can be developed for residential. This remediation plan requirement does not preclude rezoning of the property from an industrial zone to a residential zone but is a factor of the site for the commission to keep in consideration. The site has received a conditional grant commitment for \$6,000,000 for the remediation of the site from the Department of Economic and

Community Development (DECD), with one of the conditions being a change of zoning from a heavy industry zone to a residential zone.

The future land use map of in New Haven's Comprehensive Plan Vision 2034 shows this area as being High-Density Mixed-Use within the next ten years. The proposed housing development will offer high-density housing as well as small commercial uses, thus supporting a mixed-use condition in line with the future land use goals and contextually appropriate for the predominantly residential abutting areas. This application aligns with the City's Plan of Conservation and Development, New Haven Vision 2034 (Adopted October 2025), and the below section identifies specific goals and strategies with which this proposal aligns.

NEW HAVEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: SUBMISSION MEETS REQUIREMENTS

The City of New Haven's Vision 2034 Comprehensive plan emphasizes the need for greater housing development city wide. Staff find the proposed zoning amendment to be in alignment with that vision and note that several goals found in the Great Places to Live focus area would be furthered by it. The applicant identified some of these goals in their submission, highlighting the increased number of dwelling units this amendment would facilitate, the deep affordability of those units, and plans to rehabilitate the historic mill building on 89 a/ka 91 Shelton Avenue. Overall, staff find the proposed map amendment to be consistent with the goals of the comprehensive plan.

New Haven Vision 2034, Goals addressed by this project include:

Great Places to Live

Goal 1: Increase the number of deeply affordable housing units.

- **Strategy 1.2:** Prioritize the development of housing units affordable to households at or below 30% of Area Median Income (AMI) in development of mixed-income housing.
- **Strategy 1.7:** Advocate for the development of more affordable housing across the region.

Goal 2: Increase housing supply.

- **Strategy 2.1:** Identify opportunities for and take measures to support infill residential development, expansions, and redevelopment.
- **Strategy 2.7:** Increase affordable, accessible housing options for people with disabilities.

Goal 4: Transform empty and run-down properties into affordable housing and other community resources.

Goal 5: Support place-based programs, policies, and improvements that align with the unique assets and goals of each neighborhood and residents' quality of life.

- **Strategy 5.4:** Support mixed-use development and ensure that such development is sensitive to the neighborhood.

CITY CHARTER AND ZONING ORDINANCE CRITERIA

Sections(s) 181 and 182 of the Charter of The City of New Haven

The City Plan Commission finds that, based on submitted information, the proposed zoning ordinance amendment complies with Sections 181 and 182 of the Charter of the City of New Haven in that it is:

- (i.) uniform for each class of buildings or structures,
- (ii.) made in accordance with the comprehensive plan,
- (iii.) designed to lessen congestion in the streets, secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers, promote health and the general welfare, provide adequate light and air, prevent the overcrowding of land, avoid undue concentration of population, facilitate the adequate provisions for transportation, water, sewerage, parks and other public requirements, and
- (iv.) made with reasonable consideration, as to the character of the proposed district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses, and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the City.

Section 64(d)(2)c of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance

Section 64(d)(2) requires that the City Plan Commission take the following into consideration in evaluating any amendment to the Zoning Map:

a. Errors in the existing ordinance, changes that have taken place in the city and in patterns of construction and land use, the supply of land and its peculiar suitability for various purposes, the effect of a map change on the surrounding area, the purposes of zoning and the comprehensive plan of the City of New Haven:

As stated, recent adjacent rezonings such as the change at 201 Munson Street from IH to RH-2 as well as recent large-scale developments proposed and built in the surrounding area such as the Winchester Lofts project indicate a significant shift in land use pattern in line with supporting greater high-density residential use for this and nearby properties. Further, the City has seen an increasing need for land used in support of housing and mixed-use development to respond appropriately to the regional and national housing shortage. The purposes of the zoning ordinance and the goals of the comprehensive plan (Vision 2034) are well applied in this instance as a property that has struggled to maintain its industrial activity within a growing residential area is imagined for adaptive reuse towards more productive and timely residential and small-scale commercial uses.

b. Whether some other method or procedure under the zoning ordinance is more appropriate:

The proposed zoning map amendment is the most appropriate method to support residential development on this site and follows the trend of transition of industrial to residential seen in the surrounding area.

c. In the case of a map change, the size of the area involved. As a general policy, the City Plan Commission shall not consider favorably any petition which would result in a total contiguous area (separated only by streets, and excluding the area of streets) of less than two acres in the

case of a residence district, less than one acre in the case of a Business District, or less than four acres in the case of an Industrial District:

The contiguous area of the proposed ordinance map amendment exceeds the required minimum at a total size of approximately 4.9 acres.

FINDINGS AND ADVICE

Based on the above it is the recommendation of the Commission that the proposed map amendment is in full compliance with the standards and requirements of Section(s) 181 and 182 of the Charter of the City of New Haven and Section 64(d)(2) of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance and should be **Approved**.

ADOPTED: February 25, 2026
Ernest Pagan
Chair

ATTEST: _____
Laura E Brown
Executive Director, Plan Department