

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: [ORDINANCE AMENDING THE NEW HAVEN CODE OF ORDINANCES](#) for the purposes of (i) classifying the Elm City Lofts Project as a property used for housing solely for low or moderate income persons or families, (ii) providing an abatement of real estate taxes for the Elm City Lofts Project and (iii) authorizing the mayor to enter into a tax abatement agreement with Elm City Lofts, LLC in accordance with Conn. Gen. Stat. Sec. 8-215, annotated charter of the City of New Haven, Article IV, Section 6, and City of New Haven Code of General Ordinances, Section 28-4.

Submitted by: Elm City Lofts, LLC

REPORT: 1678-10

ADVICE: Approval

PROJECT ADDRESSES:

- 71 Shelton Avenue (MBLU: 284 0392 0010)
- 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue (MBLU: 284 0392 02700)

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:

The petition for this ordinance amendment was dated for and received at the January 5, 2026, Board of Alders meeting. Legistar File ID: LM-2025-0676. The submission included:

- Cover Letter
- Ordinance

BACKGROUND

The Applicant, Elm City Lofts, LLC has applied to the City of New Haven's Board of Alders for a tax abatement for 17 Grand List years under which the assessment for the Shelton Avenue Properties will be frozen for two years and thereafter the taxes to be paid will be in the amount of \$450 per unit plus a 3% annual increase after the first year during the following fourteen (14) years under the City of New Haven's program for Tax Abatement for Low Income Multi-Family Developments (the "LISHTA Program").

The development proposal from Elm City Lofts, LLC that is spurring this ordinance amendment and request for a tax abatement agreement 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 proposed 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 tax abatement requested by the Applicant will be used to (i) reduce rents below the levels which would be achieved in the absence of the abatement and to improve the quality and design of the Elm City Lofts Project, (ii) effect occupancy of the Elm City Lofts Project by persons and families of varying income levels and (iii) provide necessary related facilities and services for the Elm City Lofts Project.

The Tax Abatement Agreement shall also provide that the City will conduct an Annual Compliance Review of the Elm City Lofts Project regarding its compliance with the affordability requirements of the LISHTA program and related matters and that the Tax Abatement Agreement shall be filed on the land records of the City. The Board of Alders has the authority to grant the Application for a tax abatement pursuant to Conn. Gen. Stat. Sec. 8-215, the Annotated Charter of the City of New Haven Charter, Article IV, Section 6 and the City of New Haven Code of General Ordinances, Section 28-4.

PARCEL HISTORY

The site of the proposed ordinance amendment comprises two parcels, approximately 4.9 acres, located 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. The site is adjacent to PDD 49 to the east, RH2 zone to the south, and RM2 to the west and north.

The property at 71 Shelton Avenue (MBLU: 284 0392 0010) is owned by ZSY DEVELOPMENT LLC. The property at 89 a/k/a 91 Shelton Avenue (MBLU: 284 0392 02700) is owned by NEW HAVEN BUSINESS CENTER LLC.

The structures at 71 and 89 (AKA 91) Shelton Avenue were built in 1915 as part of the World War I factory expansion of the Winchester Repeating Arms Co. 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 (AKA 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. 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 heavy industry to a residential zone, which Elm City Lofts, LLC has already applied for and is addressed in a companion staff report (CPC #1678-06).

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 1492-07:** Special Permit for wireless telecommunications facility. Applicant: Sandy Carter of Cellco.
- **CPC 1426-10:** Special Permit for Telecommunications Facility. Applicant: Youghiogheny Comm NE/Pocket.
- **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 1427-A:** Environmental Land Use Restriction (ELUR).
- **CPC 1425-01:** Special Permit for Addition of New Equipment to Existing Telecommunications Facility in an IH Zone. Applicant: Omnipoint (T-Mobile) Communications.
- **CPC 1389-01:** Special Permit to locate a Wireless Telecommunications Facility in an IH Zone. Applicant: Omnipoint (T-Mobile) Communications.
- **CPC 1382-04:** SESC Review for Soil Remediation Project in an IH Zone. Applicant: Olin Corp.

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 the proposed map amendment (further addressed in CPC report #1678-06) as well as this proposed ordinance amendment for a tax abatement agreement 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”.

The development proposal from Elm City Lofts, LLC that is spurring this ordinance amendment and request for a tax abatement agreement 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 will include 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 Comprehensive Plan (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 staff 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 which is something for the commission to consider. 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 of the site from heavy industry to a residential zone which Elm City Lofts, LLC has already applied for and is addressed in a companion staff report (CPC #1678-06)..

During the site plan review process, the applicant should further articulate how the proposed housing will integrate into the existing neighborhood and how the project will connect to the adjacent Farmington Canal Greenway and the future shared use path along the discontinued Argyle Street. This application aligns with the City's Plan of Conservation and Development, New Haven Vision 2034, and the below section identifies specific goals and strategies that this proposal aligns with.

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 ordinance 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, particularly the increased number of dwelling units the proposed ordinance 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 ordinance 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.

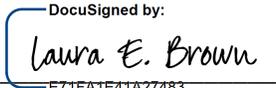
Goal 5: Support place-based programs, policies, and improvements that align with the unique assets and goals of each neighborhood and residents' quality of life.

- Support mixed-use development and ensure that such development is sensitive to the neighborhood.

ADVICE

The new development meets many of the city's overall goals from both an affordable housing and neighborhood development perspective. While the tax agreement will be further reviewed by the appropriate city entities, the Commission lends its support to the ordinance as highly consistent with Vision 2034, New Haven's Comprehensive Plan of Development.

ADOPTED: February 25, 2026
Ernest Pagan
Chair

ATTEST: 
Laura E Brown
Executive Director, Plan Department