

Misty Maza

Subject:

FW: As of Right Cultural Uses for IL Zone

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From: Helen Kauder <helenkauder@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, June 28, 2026 3:39 AM

To: Misty Maza <MMaza@newhavenct.gov>

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Subject: As of Right Cultural Uses for IL Zone

Dear Colleagues,

I write in support of the text amendment to New Haven's Zoning Ordinance. New Haven is home to one of the largest concentration of artists and cultural workers of any New England community when measured on a per capita basis. As the founder of the City Wide Open Studios festival, which had its beginnings in 1998, I have seen first hand the growth in pride in the talent and output of this growing community, and how New Haven now defines itself as a cultural magnet. Museum technicians, curators, designers, conservators, artists, architects, and fabricators are the backbone of this vibrancy. The creative production ecosystem thrives with access to raw space that can be flexible for rotating exhibitions and the fabrication that supports those exhibitions. Opening receptions draw audiences from the region, and typically take place on weekends when manufacturing isn't operating. Moreover, the visits to the exhibitions bring eyes on the street and enhanced safety to New Haven's less trafficked areas.

New Haven is fortunate that its IL zones are easily accessible with public transportation to and from the Green and from nearby schools, making the spaces ideal to foster employment and human development. Allowing museums and galleries to operate by right will facilitate the implementation of the City's Cultural Equity Plan, which, as my colleagues have emphasized, underscores the current lack of space for cultural production.

The Ely Center of Contemporary Art, which has been in New Haven since 1962, was recently displaced from its downtown location to make room for more housing, and is currently operating out of City Seed in IL district. New Haven Public School students will be spending their summer there in an apprenticeship working under the guidance of an esteemed University of New Haven Arts faculty member. On July 24, at 5 pm, we invite the IL Zone alders to witness the way in which a light industry space can serve the cultural and workforce development aims of our city. The apprentices will present their projects and creative output; they would be honored by your presence.

Thank you for your support,

Helen Kauder

Former Executive Director, Artspace New Haven

