

Clifton Watson, PhD  
57 Winthrop Terrace  
Meriden, CT 06451

Dear New Haven Board of Alders,

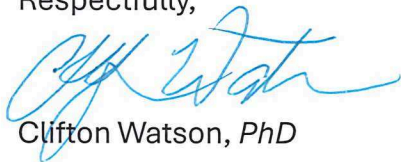
My name is Clifton Watson. I was born and raised in the Newhallville section of the city. I am currently the Director of Community Partnerships at Wesleyan University. I am writing to share my thoughts and express my support of LM 2026-0109 to permit cultural activities as-of-right in Light Industrial (IL) Districts.

My family came to New Haven in the late 1940s in search of new economic and educational opportunities. Along with tens of thousands of others who migrated from the American South to the city in the decades following World War II, they played a critical role in helping shape a New Haven that could seize the opportunities of the twentieth century and respond to its unique needs.

Today, as New Haven continues its journey of development– in ways that representative and responsive to the cross-section of people who call the city home - I believe that LM 2026-0109 should receive your thoughtful and serious consideration. As many structures in light industrial zones have lasted beyond their original functionality and remain empty – often eye sores and in ill-repair – we have an opportunity to reimagine and repurpose said buildings with intentionality. It is clear that buildings that house arts and cultural experiences, creative business, and/or social parlors are, and have always been important institutions in our city. They often hold enormous transformative power for the people who visit them and for our city broadly.

In my opinion this petition should be approved. The city deserves and needs us all to be forward thinking, creative, and bold as we continue to invest in the long-term growth of New Haven.

Respectfully,



Clifton Watson, PhD