

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: [ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS](#) approving the acquisition by the City of New Haven of those properties known as 510 Grand Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut, and 510A Grand Avenue, New Haven, Connecticut, for park purposes, such acquisition to be by way of a negotiated sale and purchase, or, if necessary, by such other means as may be available to the City of New Haven, including the use of eminent domain.

Submitted by: Economic Development Administrator

REPORT: 1678-09

ADVICE: Approval

PROJECT ADDRESSES:

- 510 Grand Ave (MBLU: 179 0567 00801) and
- 510A Grand Avenue (MBLU: 179 0567 00802)

APPLICANT/OWNER:

Applicant: City of New Haven, Economic Development Administrator

Owners:

- 510 Grand Ave (MBLU: 179 0567 00801) PARAMOUNT VIEW MILLENNIUM LLC
- 510A Grand Avenue (MBLU: 179 0567 00802) HAVEN RIVER PROPERTIES LLC

SUBMISSION:

The petition for this Order was dated for and received at the January 20, 2026, Board of Alders meeting. Legistar File ID: LM-2026-0007. The submission included:

- Checklist
- Cover Letter
- Order – EDA English station Acquisition
- Public Notification Form
- Fiscal Impact Statement

BACKGROUND

The Applicant, the City of New Haven, has applied to the City of New Haven Board of Alders to enable the City of New Haven to acquire two parcels, 510 and 510A Grand Avenue. The parcels are located within the Mill River district and are bound by Grand Avenue to the north and the Mill River along the east, west, and south. This location is a major gateway point between the Wooster Square neighborhood to the west and the Fair Haven neighborhood to the east, connected by the Grand Avenue corridor. The surrounding area was the focus of the Mill River District Planning Study conducted in 2013 and adopted by the Board of Alders in 2014 (detailed further in the “Planning Considerations” section).

The two properties constitute approximately 8.6 acres on Ball Island in the Mill River and they contain a 181,810 sq ft structure that housed the former English Station, a now vacant power plant. The plant first opened in 1929 and was deactivated in 1992. It was owned by United Illuminating

until 2000. Ball Island on which English Station is located is a man-made island constructed using historically placed fill and comprised of ash, dredge spoils, and other miscellaneous debris. The island is largely impervious ground and building surfaces.

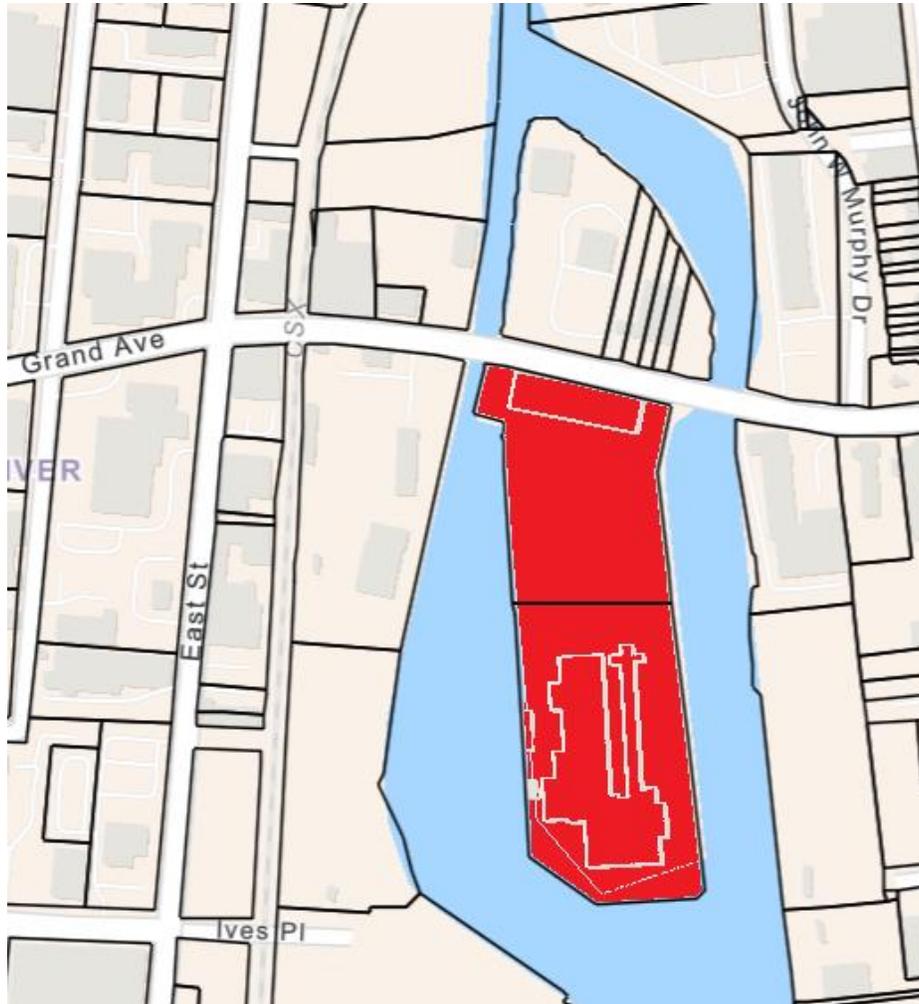


Figure 1. Parcel Map

This property with the remaining English Station structure has been the site of severe environmental contamination as a result of heavy industrial activity using coal and fuel oil, including the presence of pollutants such as heavy metals and asbestos, the storage of equipment and oil containing polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and the release of other known carcinogens. The site has also had a number of spills in its history that have exposed the Mill River and surrounding environment to these pollutants.

As such, it has created a major public health and environmental hazard and is a site of significant blight impacting the surrounding Mill River district and connected communities of Wooster Square and Fair Haven. In 2016, United Illuminating entered into a Partial Consent Order with the State of Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) to perform environmental remediation of the site. Such remediation has yet to be completed to the quality or

schedule of the Consent Order, which has led to United Illuminating, DEEP, and the Connecticut Attorney General's Office to enter litigation concerning the status of the delayed remediation. Remediation activities on the site have paused during this period of legal dispute. As a result, the site has remained vacant and contaminated since the deactivation of the power plant in 1992. Extensive environmental remediation will be required for the Site to be safely reused. The City believes that various legal disputes will be decided either in State court(s) or in various administrative proceedings in 2026 representing an opportunity for the City to shape the future use of the Site.

The location is within the FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area AE zone at Flood Elevation 12. Projections from the Connecticut Institute for Resilience & Climate Adaptation (CIRCA) estimate that this area will be subject to significant (3-4 feet) of flooding during future 100-year storm events, particularly given forecast sea level rise.

Previous CPC Actions

- CPC 1554-01- 510 GRAND AVENUE. Coastal Site Plan and Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Review for on-site soil remediation activities in an IH zone. (Owner: David Tropper for Haven River Properties; Applicant/Agent: Shawn Crosbie of The United Illuminating Company). Approved with Conditions. March 20, 2019.
- CPC 1107-07: Presentation on proposed Contingency Combustion Turbine Energy Project at English Station. No action. February 21, 1990.
- CPC 1108-07: Coastal Site Plan Review for Substation at English Station and related Components of the Grand/Goffe Project. Approved March 7, 1990.
- CPC 1108-03: Application to Connecticut Siting Council, Advice to Mayor regarding Contingency Combustion Turbine Energy Project at English Station. Approved March 7, 1990.
- CPC 1149-07: Coastal Site Plan Review for installation of two gas fueled boilers and stack at English Station. Approved June 17, 1992.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

On July 28, 2025 the City of New Haven announced a proposal to acquire the site and create a new waterfront park called the "Mill River Park" that features pedestrian connections to Mill River, New Haven's first outdoor pool, recreational amenities, and natural landscape improvements that support long-term climate resiliency by way of surface heat and stormwater flooding mitigation. This application represents the first step in the formal process to obtain these properties from the current owners and begin needed remediation toward the Mill River Park vision.

The City of New Haven Economic Development Administration initiated community engagement in April 2024, including five visioning exercises regarding the neighborhood and [roposed park concept, as part of the "Mill River: Imagine Next" initiative. The proposed uses and landscape features for the Mill River Park to turn this segment of Ball Island into a recreational hub that improves upon the environmental conditions of the Mill River and increases the social and economic wellbeing of the surrounding community.

The newly proposed Park at Mill River will feature the City's first outdoor public swimming and aquatics facility as well as new opportunities for active and passive outdoor recreation in an unparallel coastal environment. Situated in the middle of the Mill River, the Site will include views of the Pearl Harbor Memorial "Q" Bridge as well as the City's skyline and surrounding neighborhoods. Conceptual plans take into consideration the needs of the City's park system, including opportunities for more active recreation, gathering spaces and access to the water itself in the form of a kayaking facility.

Funding for the proposed acquisition is anticipated to come out of a Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development Urban Act grant, which was awarded to the City for Mill River district initiatives, and accepted by the Board of Alders on September 3, 2024.

The proposed acquisition aligns with several recommendations made for the local area and waterfront areas more broadly in New Haven Vision 2034, the current Plan of Conservation and Development of the City of New Haven, the 2023 Resilient Fair Haven Current and Future Conditions Analysis, as well as the City's "Mill River: Imagine Next" planning initiative which includes a number of initiatives in the Mill River District.

Further guidance on the planning for the Park at Mill River can be found in Vision 2034, the City's new Comprehensive Plan, which states that (Climate and Ecological Connections, Goal 3 *Improve the condition of parks and open space to ensure that they are safe and accessible to all.*) *"..access to green spaces enhances mental and physical health, encourages recreation and social interaction, and strengthens community cohesion ... [contributing] to a more livable, equitable and sustainable City."*

Likewise, one of the key goals of the Connecticut Coastal Area Management Act is to improve public access to Connecticut's coast in part through open space and resilience.

NEW HAVEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: SUBMISSION MEETS REQUIREMENTS

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

Chapter: Climate and Ecological Connections

Goal 8 Ensure that streams, rivers, and coastal waters are safe and accessible to all.

Strategy 8.5 Provide safe, accessible options for swimming. Swimming is open to the public at Lighthouse Point Park and at a limited number of swimming pools at public schools. As risks associated with extreme heat increase over the coming decades, new locations for safe water recreation will be a useful tool for managing heat exposure. Creating new locations for water access (swimming, wading) must be closely aligned with understanding where water quality is appropriate and where physical conditions (shoreline configuration, debris, other land uses) are consistent with safe water access.

Strategy 3.4 Continue to facilitate the cleanup and reuse of former industrial and brownfields sites.

New Haven has multiple acres of former industrial sites with many of these sites having a history of contamination (brownfields). The City has made considerable progress in leading and supporting the clean-up of industrial and brownfields sites. It needs to maintain its focus on this issue and support the reuse of those former industrial and brownfield sites consistent with the recommendations of this plan.

Chapter: Economic Opportunity for All

Goal 3 Promote inclusive commercial development & economic activity in strategic locations that align with neighborhood goals.

Section 10.2 – The Plan’s Future Land Use map identifies the English Station Area as a Special Project Area (pink) within the Mill River Coastal Mixed Use area (green).

Section 10.2 Future Land Use Map



Figure 2. Excerpt from future land use map

ADVICE

The proposed development meets many of the city’s overall goals. While the overall project will be further reviewed by the appropriate City entities, the Commission lends its support to the Order as highly consistent with Vision 2034, New Haven’s Comprehensive Plan of Development.

ADOPTED: February 25, 2026
Ernest Pagan
Chair

ATTEST: _____
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Laura E. Brown
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Laura E Brown
Executive Director, Plan Department