

Misty Maza J.D.
Legislative Aide II

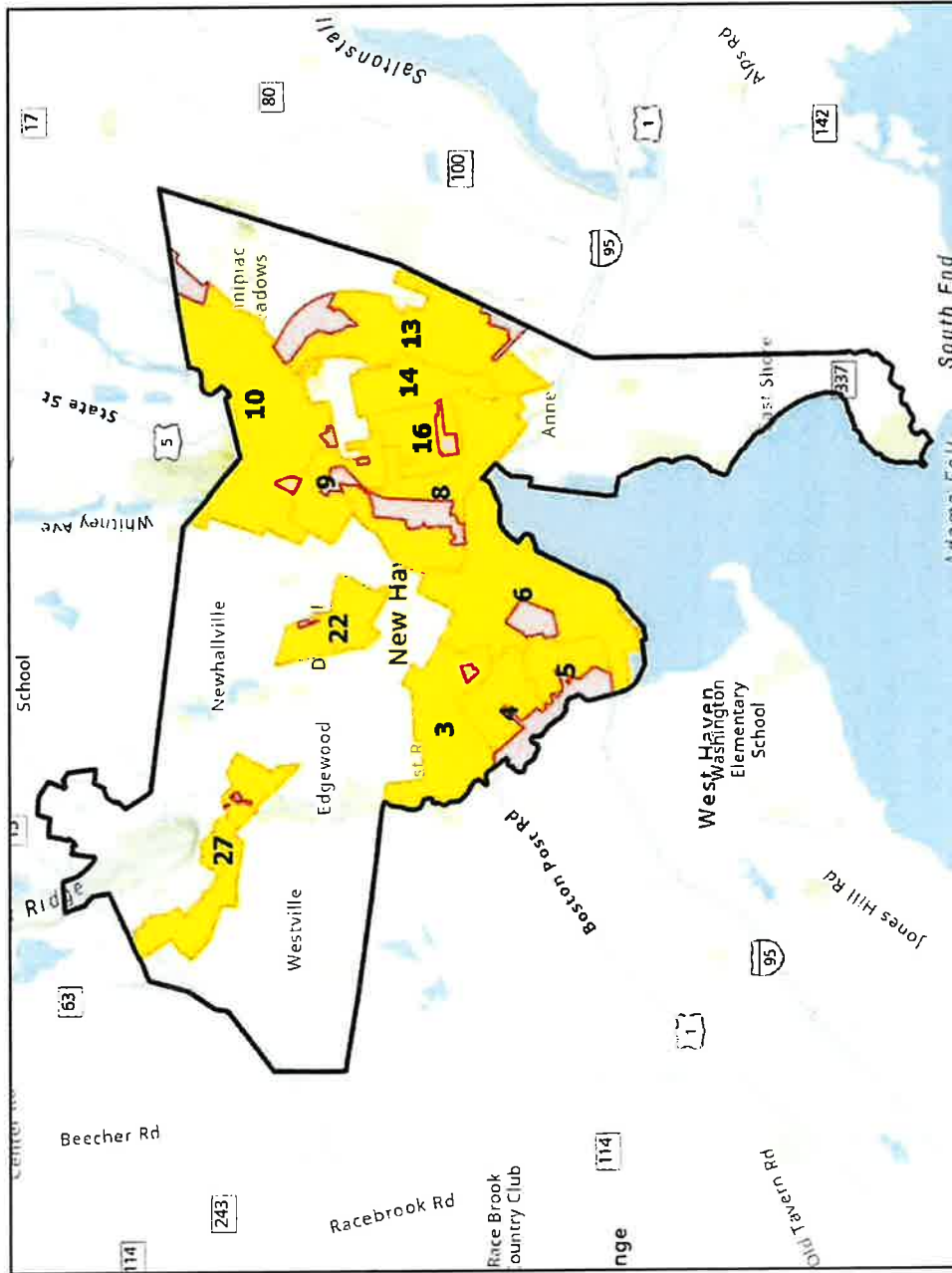
**Board of Alders Legislation Committee Hearing on
Zoning Text Amendment to Allow Cultural Activities in
the (IL) Districts**

June 30, 2026

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LIGHT INDUSTRY ZONES IN NEW HAVEN



City of New Haven

Light Industry Zones

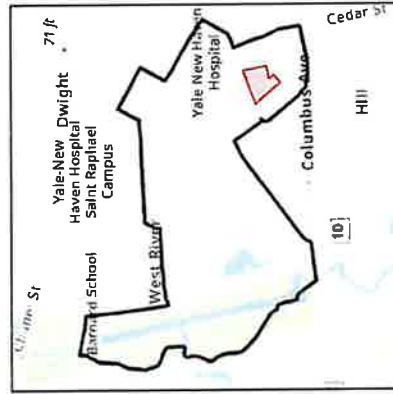
Wards

Affected Wards and Alders

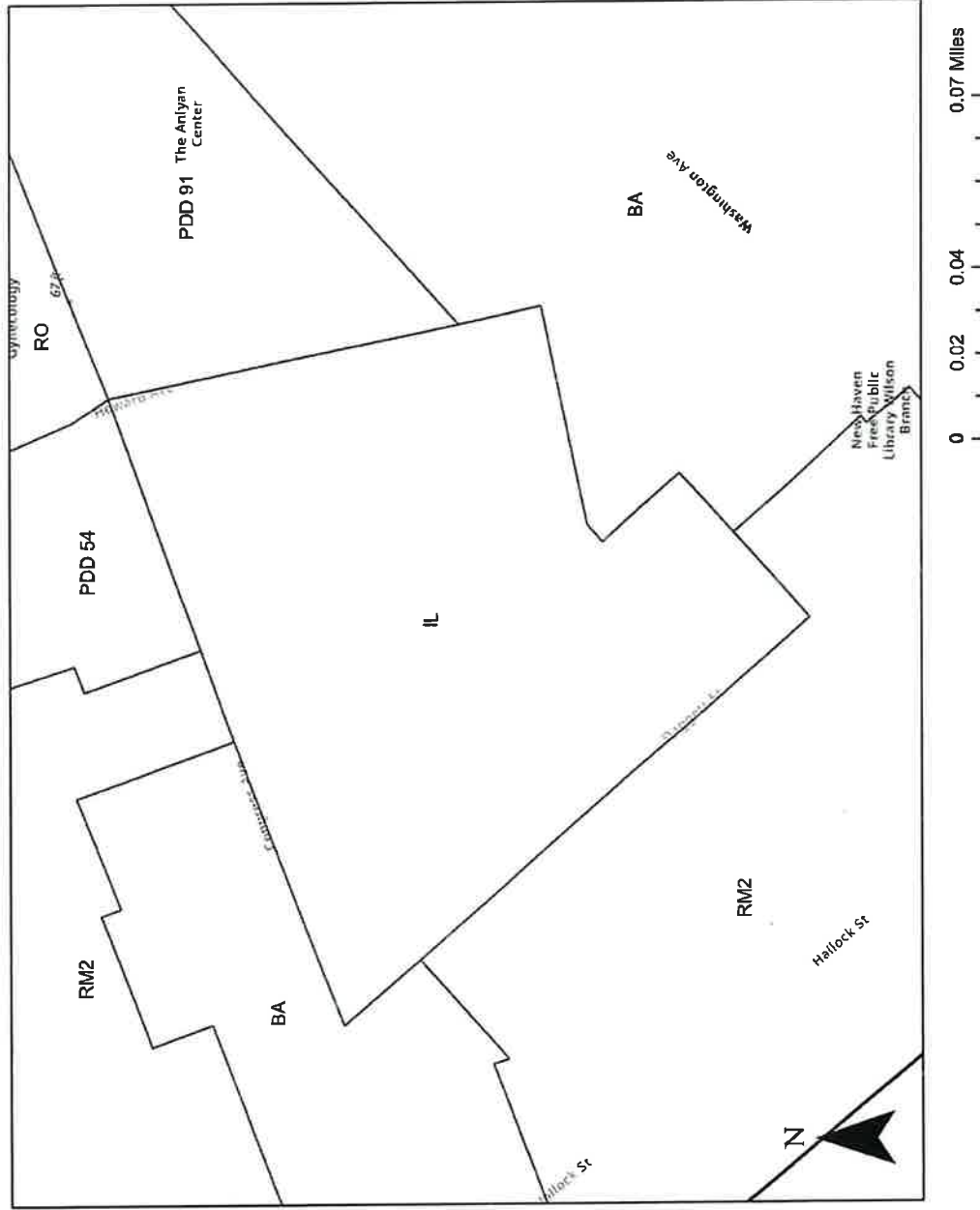
- 3rd Ward - Angel Hubbard
- 4th Ward - Evelyn Rodriguez
- 5th Ward - Kampton Singh
- 6th Ward - Carmen Rodriguez
- 8th Ward - Mandy Martinelli
- 9th Ward - Caroline T. Smith
- 10th Ward - Anna M. Festa
- 13th Ward - Mildred D. Melendez
- 14th Ward - Sarah Miller
- 16th Ward - Magda A. Natal
- 22nd Ward - Jeanette L. Morrison
- 27th Ward - Richard Furlow



WARD 3 **Angel Hubbard**

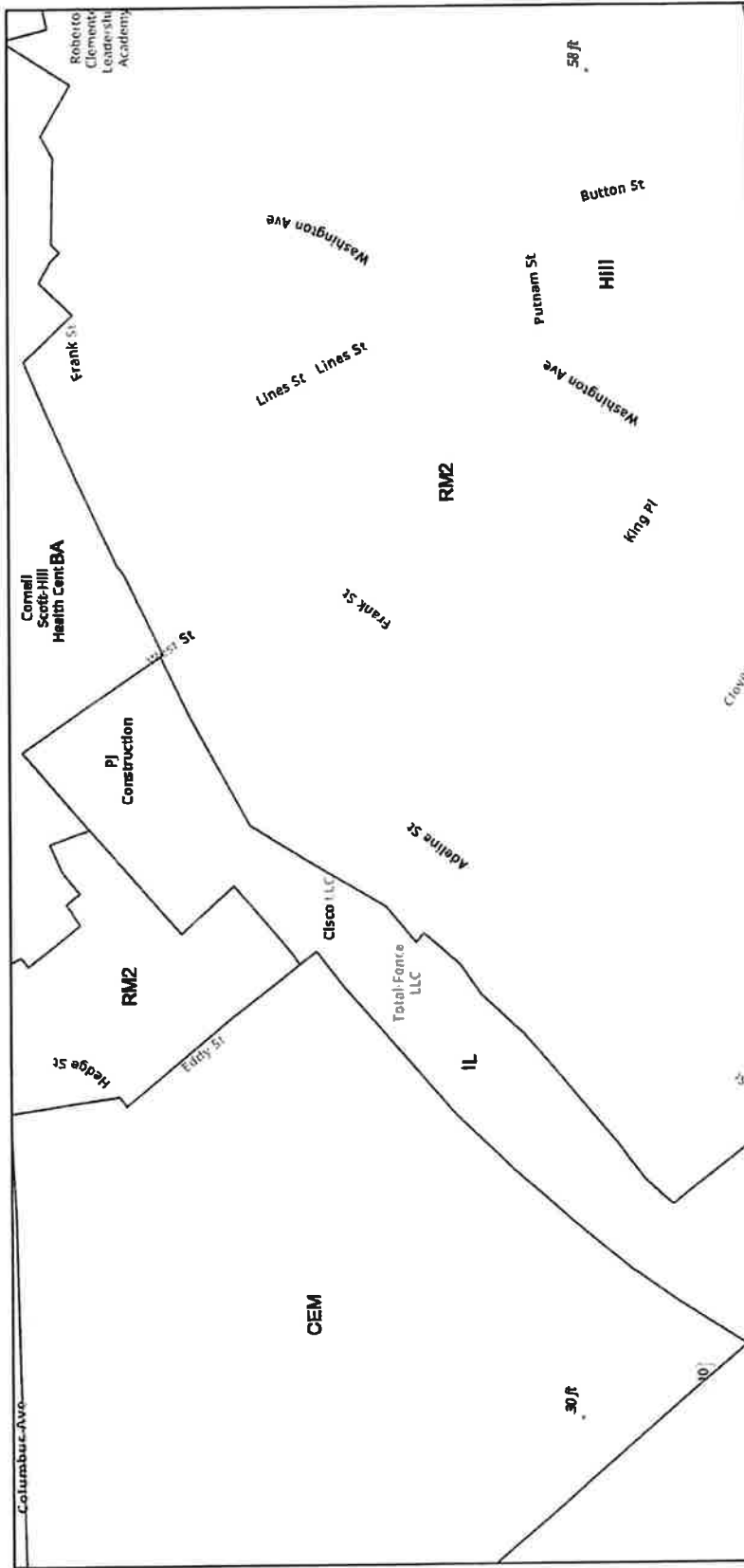


Total IL area: 6.9 acres



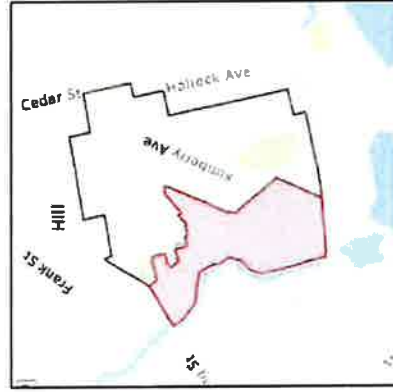
WARD 4 **Evelyn Rodriguez**



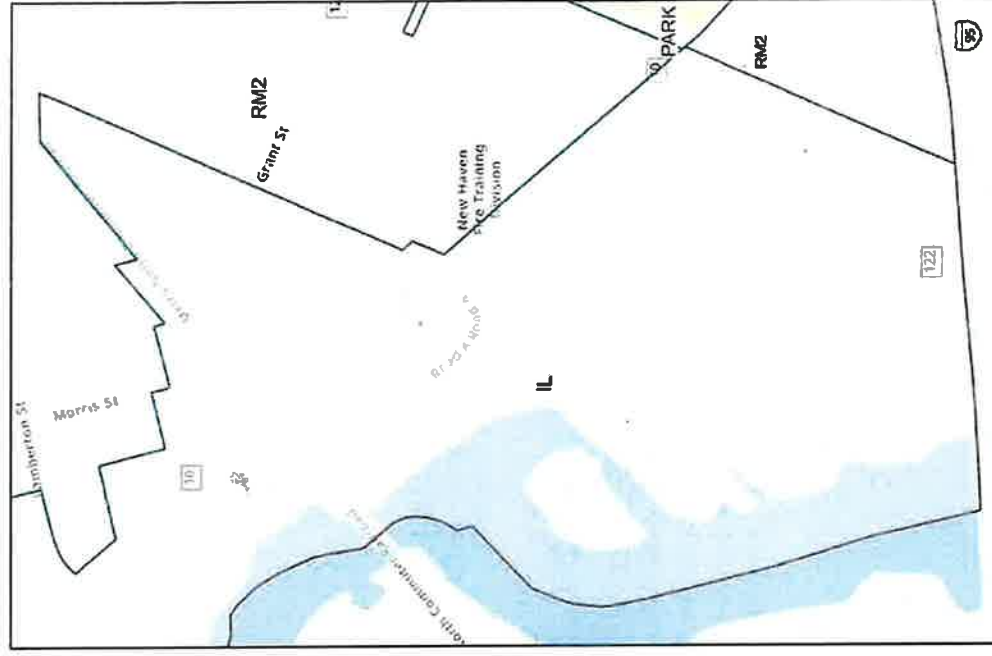


Total IL area: 78.5 acres

WARD 5 **Kampton Singh**



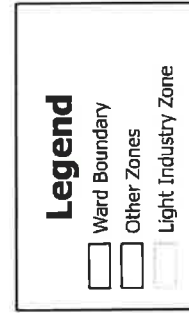
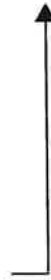
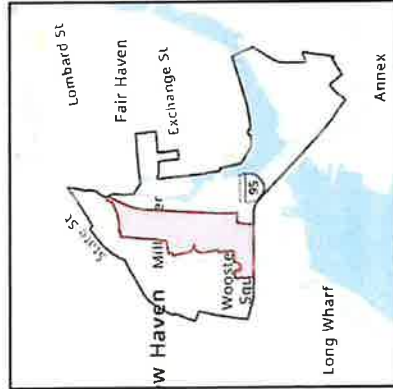
Total IL area: 63.6 acres



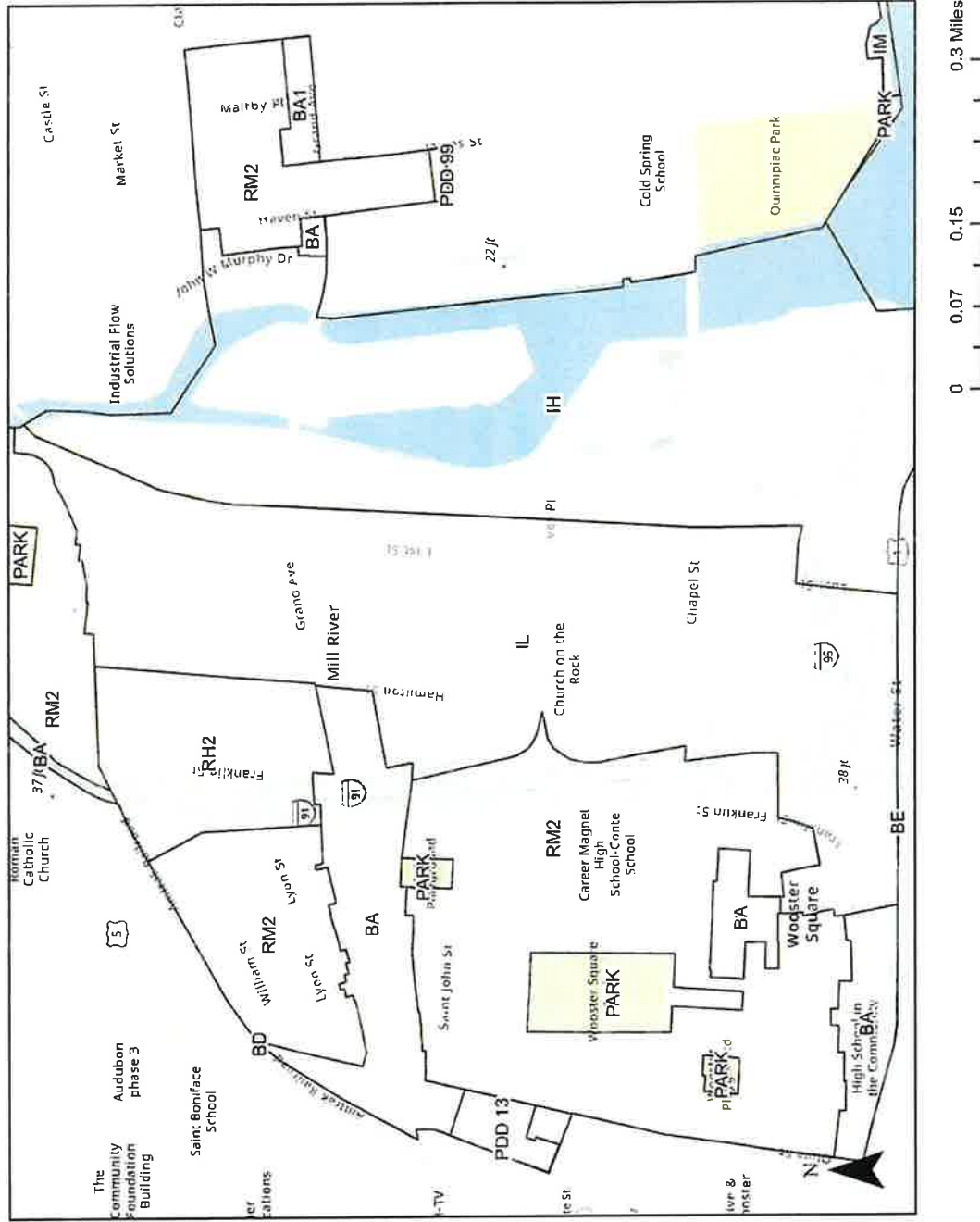


☐ Light Industry Zone
☐ Ward Boundary
☐ Other Zones

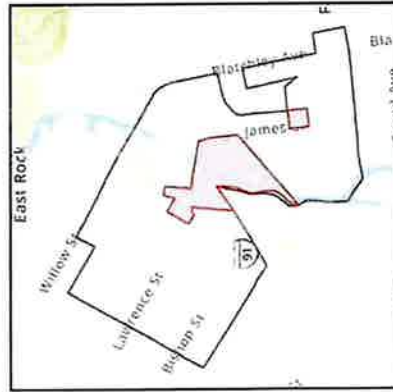
WARD 8 **Mandy Martinelli**



Total IL area: 100.2 acres



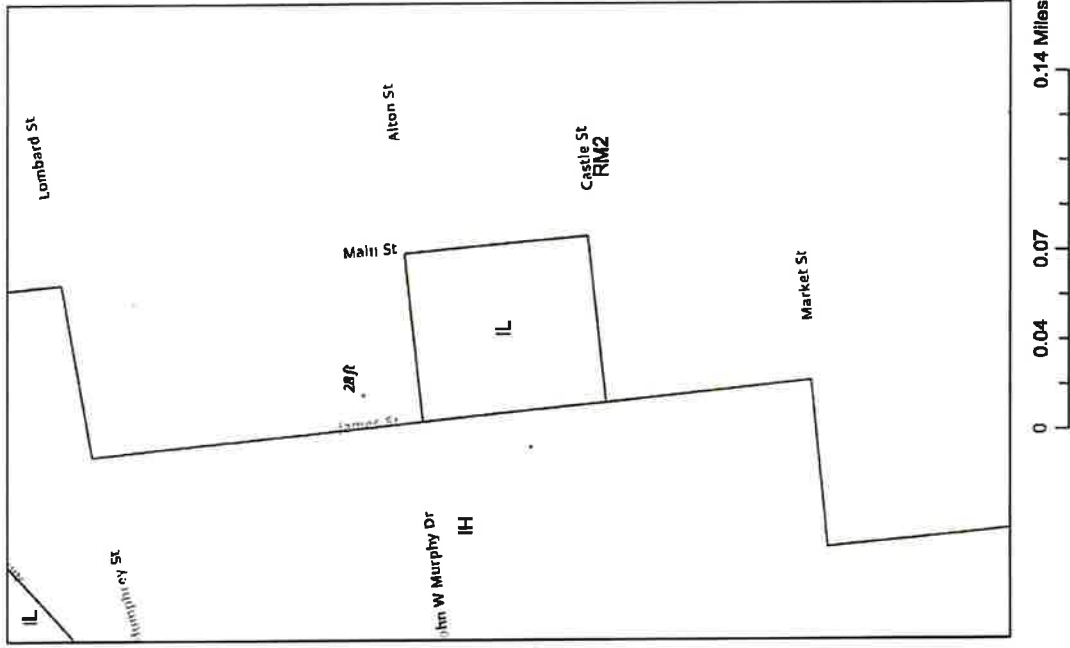
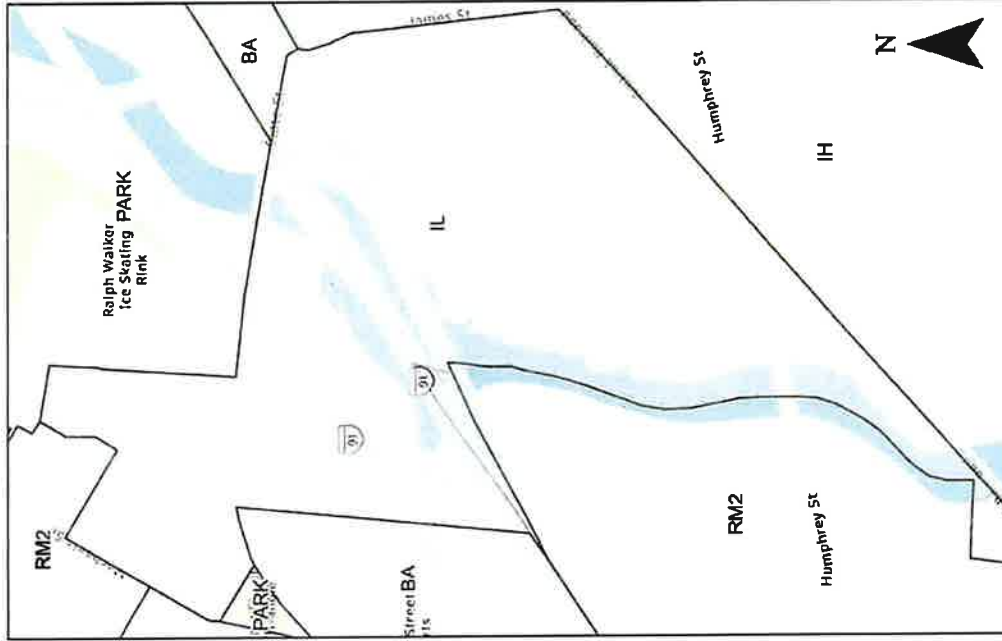
WARD 9 **Caroline T. Smith**



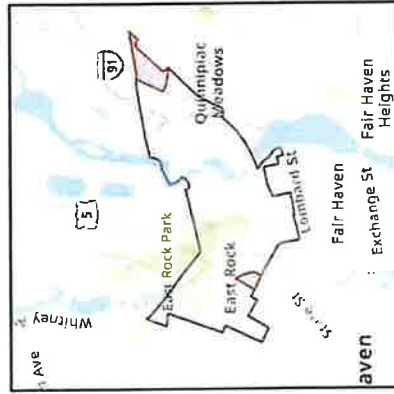
Legend

- Ward Boundary
- Other Zones
- Light Industry Zone

Total IL area: 25.7 acres



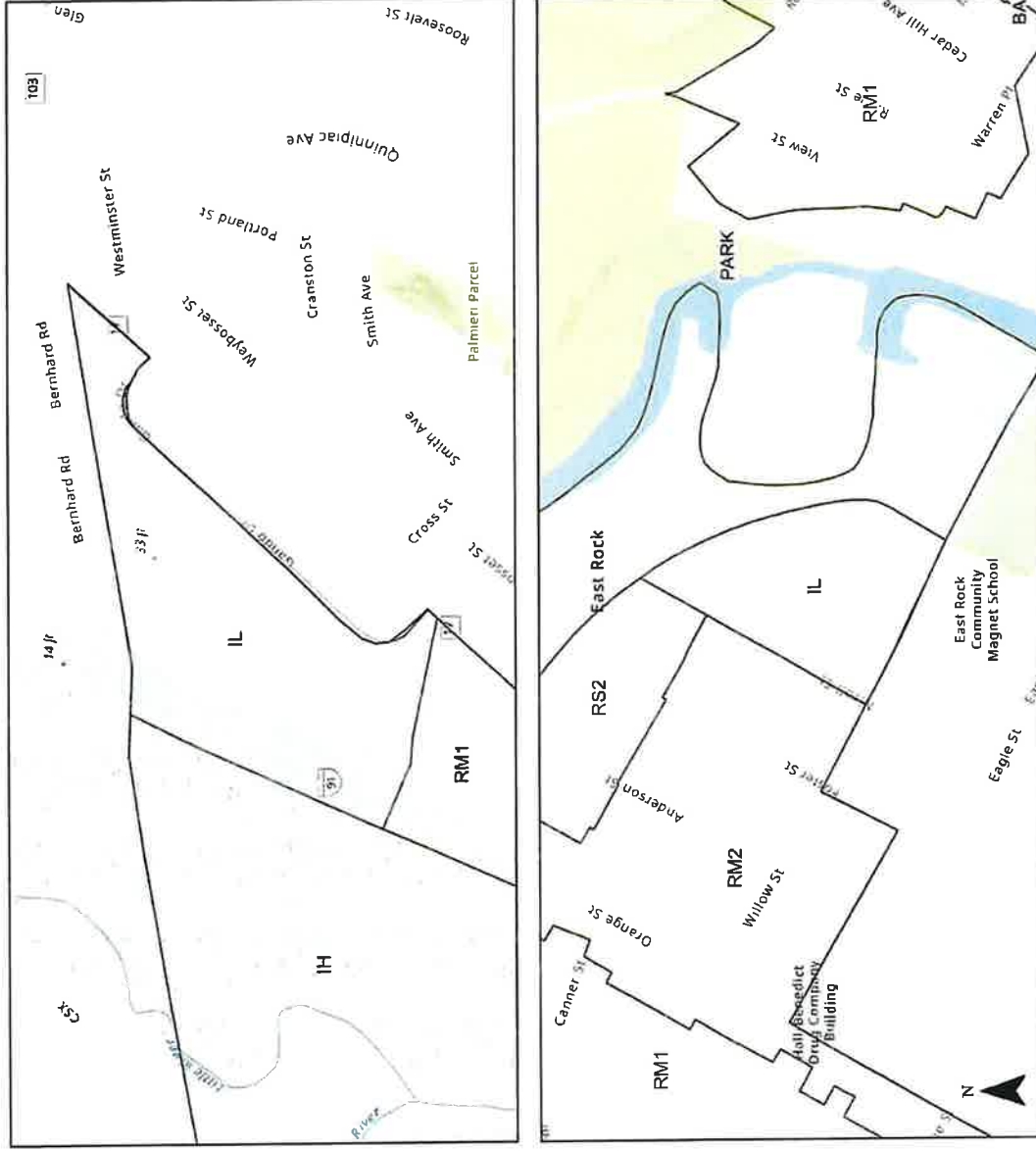
WARD 10 **Anna M. Festa**



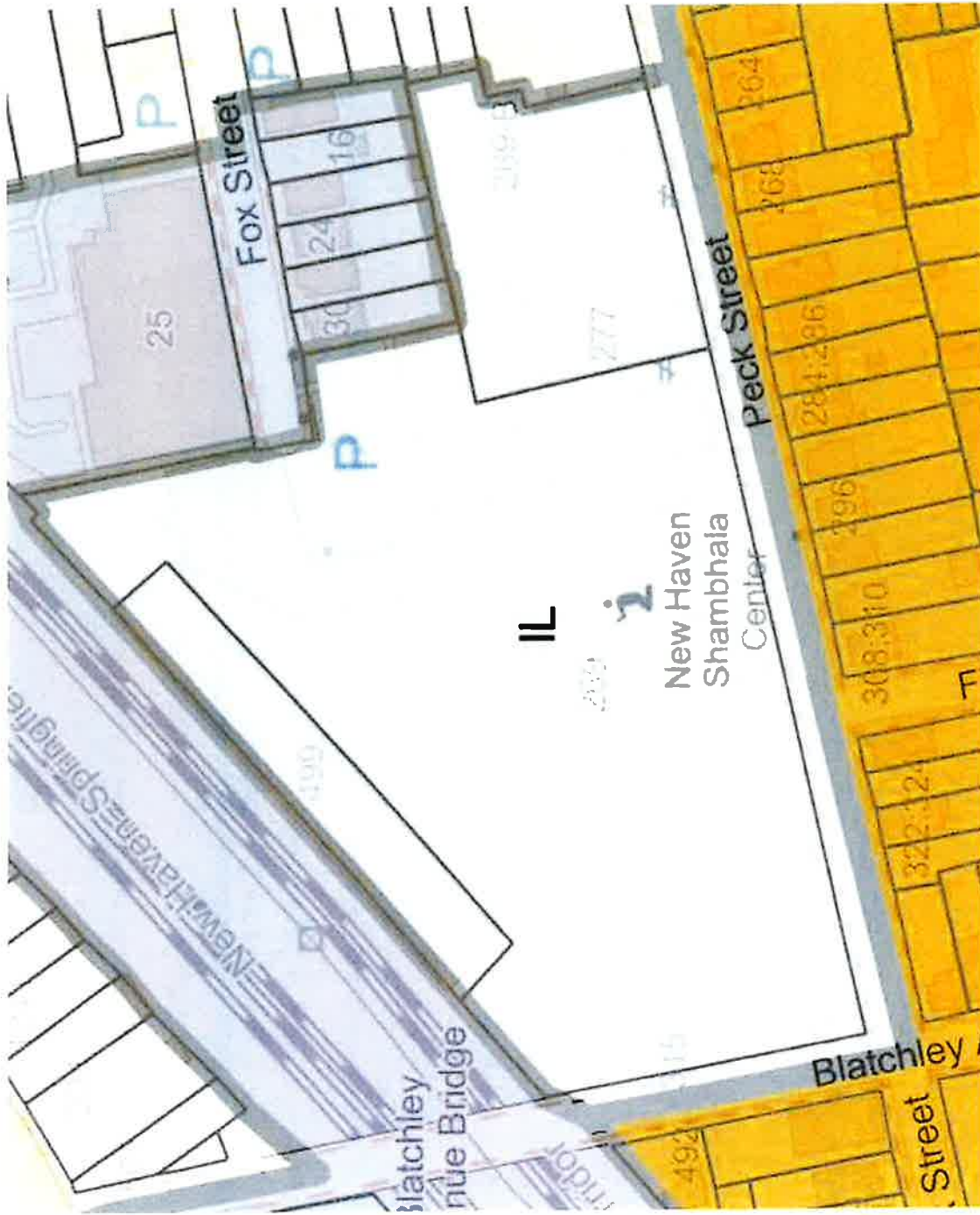
Legend

- Ward Boundary
- Other Zones
- Light Industry Zones

Total IL area: 43.8 acres



Peck Street - Erector Square Area



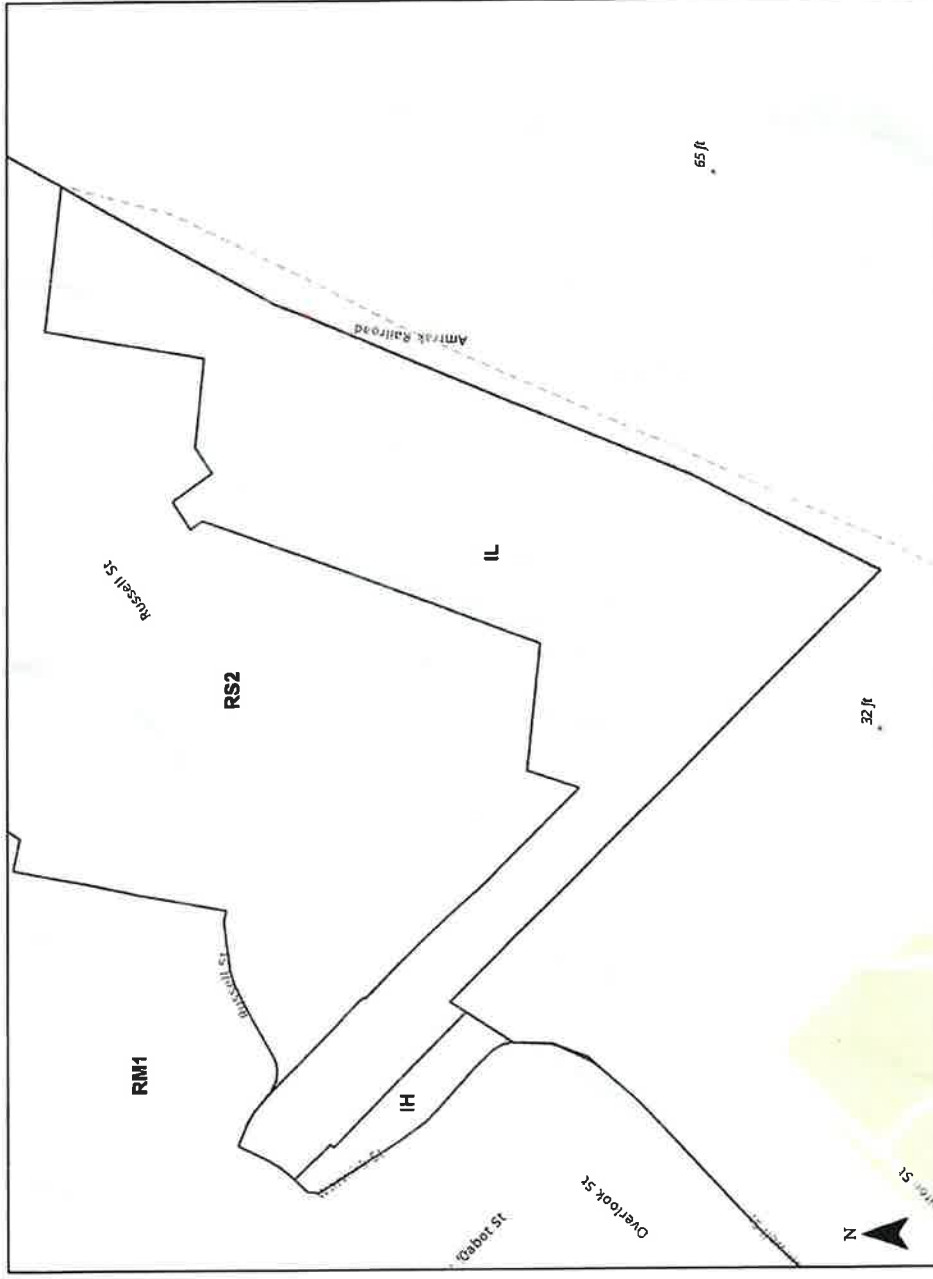
WARD 13 **Mildred D. Melendez**



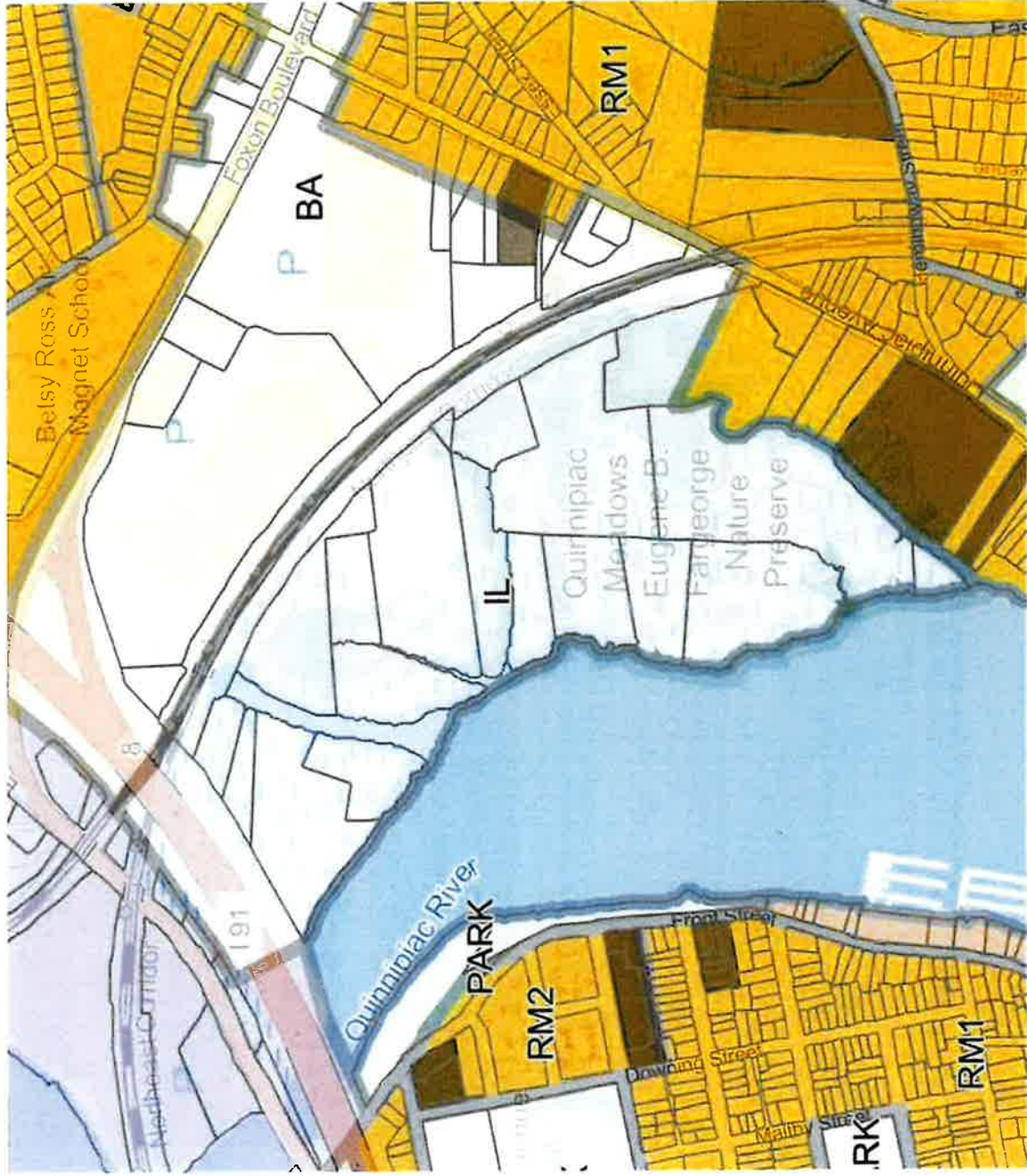
Legend

- Ward Boundary
- Other Zones
- Light Industry Zone

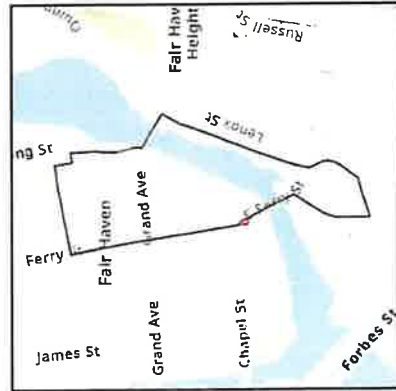
Total IL area: 28.7 acres



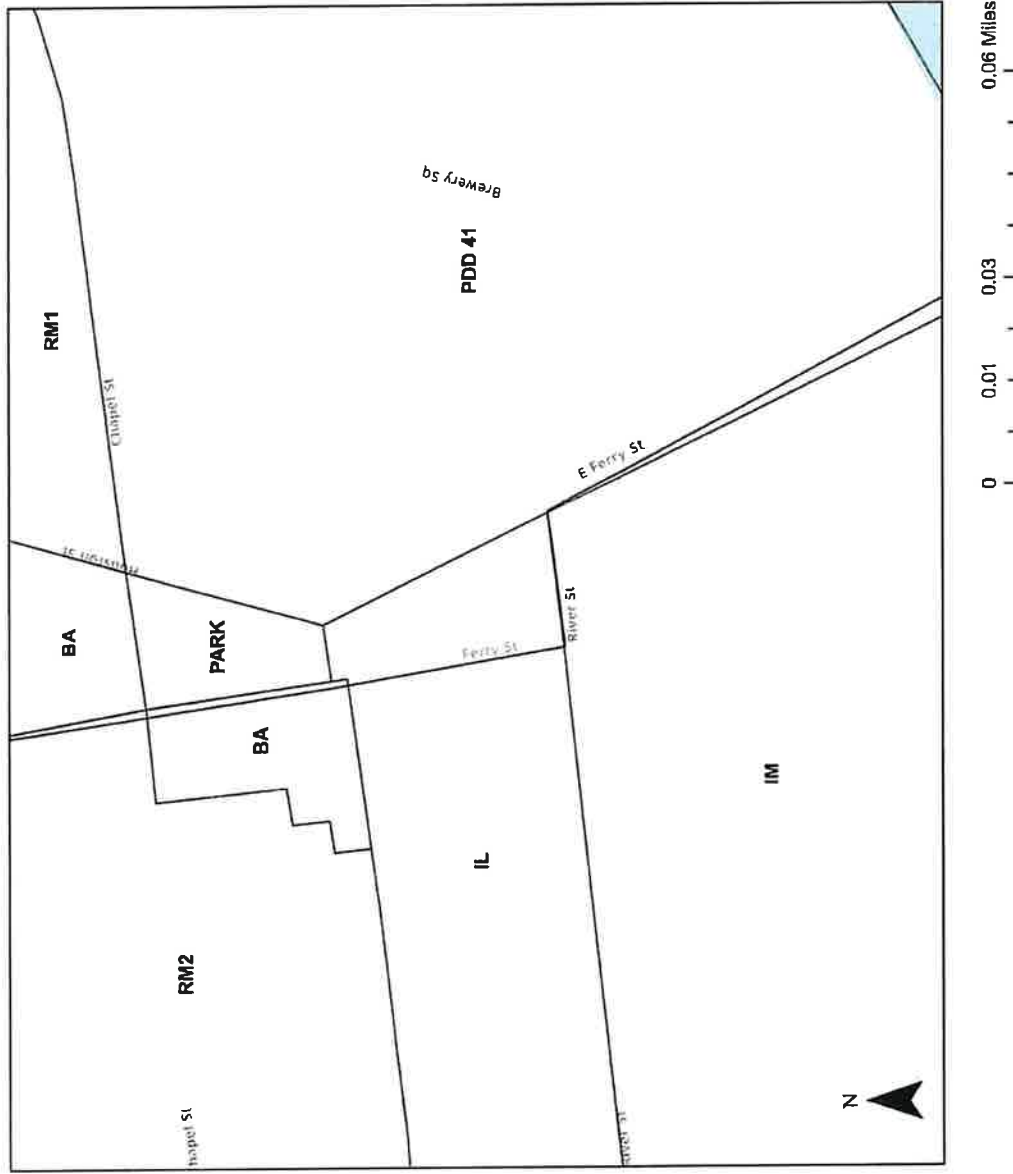
Quinnipiac Meadows – Eugene B. Fargeorge Nature Preserve and Blakeslee Arpeia and Chapman Property



WARD 14 **Sarah Miller**



Total IL area: 0.3 acre



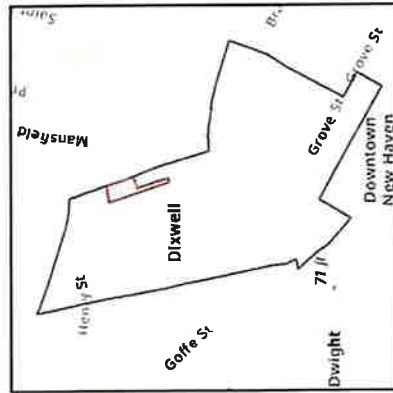
A map of the Fair Haven neighborhood. The map shows a large irregular area outlined in black. Inside this area, there is a smaller, elongated area shaded in pink. Several streets are labeled: Grand Ave runs vertically along the top left; E Pearl St runs horizontally along the top; E Perry St runs diagonally along the top right; Tarry St runs horizontally across the top; Fair Haven is written vertically along the left side of the main area; ry St is partially visible on the far left; ley Ave runs vertically on the left; ames St runs vertically on the left; and E 10th St runs vertically along the right side of the pink area. The map is oriented with North at the top.



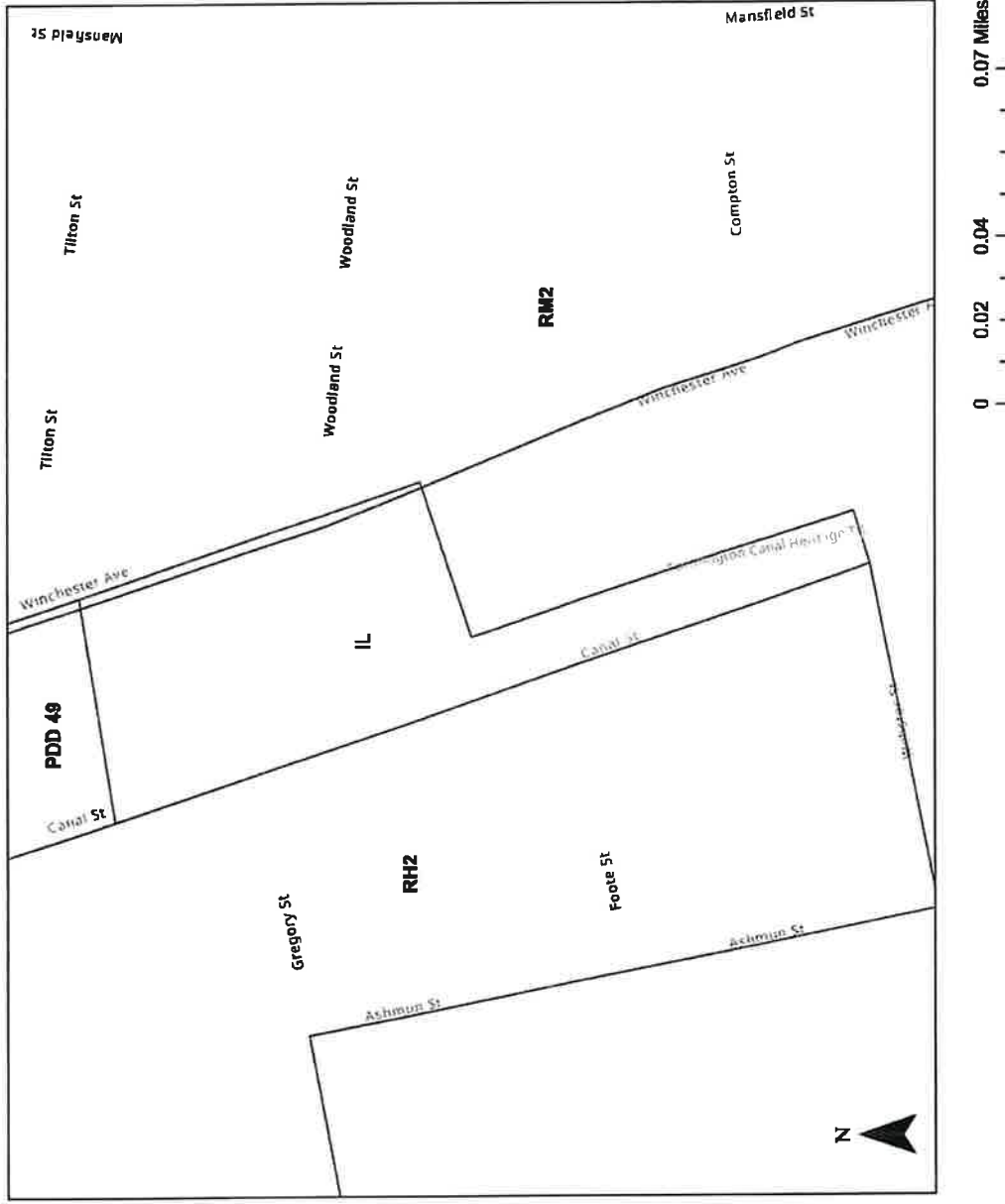
- ☐ Ward Boundary
- ☐ Other Zones
- ☐ Light Industry Zone

The map illustrates the proposed location of the Gateway Arch in St. Louis, Missouri. The Arch is shown as a yellow dot in the IM (Industrial Medium Density) zoning district, located between Blatchley Ave and River St, and between Church St and E Ferry St. The map also shows the existing Gateway Arch in the IH (Institutional High Density) zoning district, located between Blatchley Ave and River St, and between Church St and E Ferry St. The map includes various zoning districts (RM1, RM2, BA, PDD 41, PDD 99, IH, IM, IL, PARK) and streets (Blatchley Ave, Lloyd St, River St, Poplar St, Ferry St, Church St, Saltontail Ave, E Ferry St, E Chestnut St, E Locust St, E Olive St, E Pine St, E Walnut St). A scale bar indicates distances up to 0.14 miles. A north arrow is present in the bottom right corner.

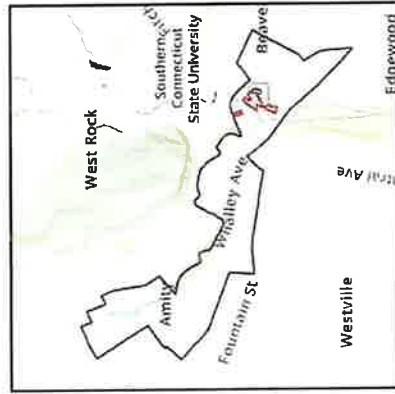
WARD 22 **Jeanette L. Morrison**



Total IL area: 2.9 acres



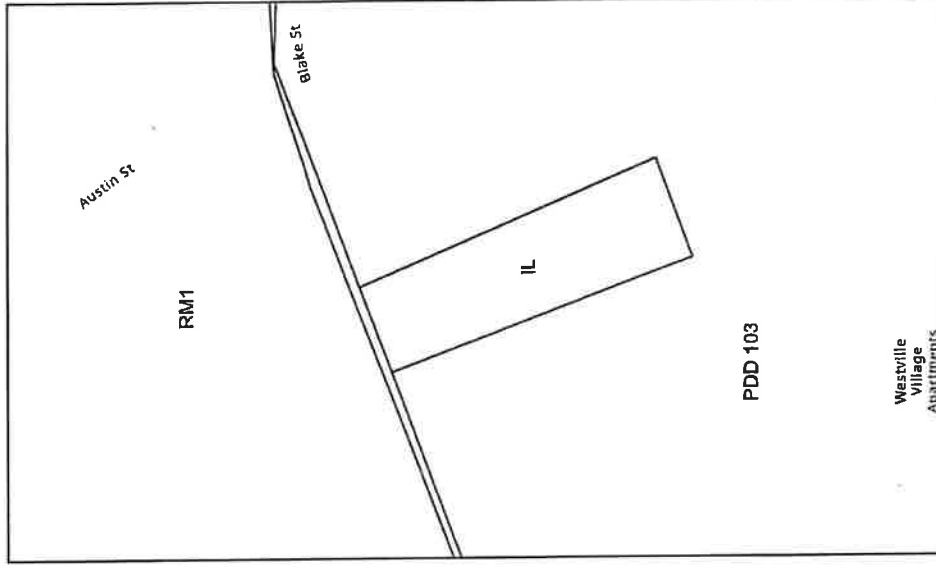
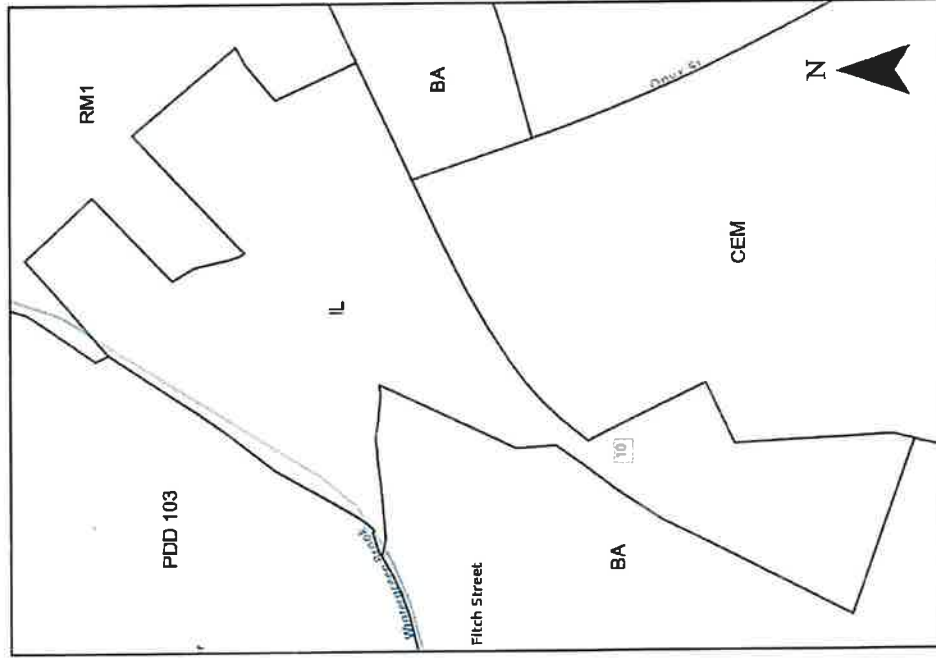
WARD 27 **Richard Furlow**



Legend

- Ward Boundary
- Other Zones
- Light Industry Zone

Total IL area: 4.3 acres





80 Hamilton Street, New Haven, CT 06511

June 8, 2026

Alder Magda A. Natal
Ward 16
225 Exchange Street
New Haven, CT 06513-3818

Dear Alder Natal,

We are writing to invite you to a conversation about a zoning text amendment that would allow cultural facilities — museums, art galleries, and libraries — as-of-right in New Haven's Light Industrial (IL) Districts. The conversation will take place at the **Lost In New Haven Museum, 80 Hamilton Street, on Monday, June 23, 2026 at 6:00 PM**. We are writing to you because you have an IL Zone within your Ward. We are also inviting the other Alders who also have IL Districts in their Wards.

We have enclosed a Ward map showing the IL-zoned parcels in your Ward and a list of properties in the IL zone. The IL Zone in Ward 16 is between Chapel and River Streets, east of James St (see map). We have also included a summary of the key policy arguments in support of the amendment and a copy of the full petition as submitted.

We believe this amendment is consistent with New Haven's Vision 2034 Comprehensive Plan and New Haven Cultural Equity Plan, and will be not only be of assistance to Lost in New Haven but also be beneficial to the neighborhoods by bringing cultural activities closer to the neighborhoods at lower costs than would be possible in downtown and also by reusing vacant older industrial buildings that are well suited for arts and museums due to their open spaces, high ceilings and strong floors.

We want to hear your perspective about the proposed amendment and to answer any questions that you may have. Also, if you would like, we can offer a tour of our Museum.

We also want to alert you to a public hearing before the Board of Alders Legislation Committee June 30, 2026 at 6:00 pm in the Aldermanic Chambers.

We value the opportunity to meet with you, and if June 23rd is not convenient for you, please let us know so we can schedule a time and place to discuss the amendment that works for you.

We hope you will join us on June 23rd or otherwise be in touch with any questions about this proposal.

Please RSVP by June 18 to me at cynthia@lostinnewhaven.org or call 203-507-2436.

With appreciation,

Cynthia Bannon
Managing Director, Lost in New Haven

Enclosures:

- IL Zone Maps — Citywide and Your Ward
- Listing of Properties in the IL zone in your Ward
- Summary of Proposed Text Amendment to Allow Cultural Uses in IL Zones
- Full Proposed Text Amendment

PROPOSED ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT

Allowing Cultural Activities Non Carried on As A Gainful Business As-of- Right in Light Industrial (IL) Districts

Prepared for the Alders of Who Have IL Districts In Their Wards
Alders Conversation : June 23, 2026

What Is Being Proposed

The petition brought by Lost In New Havn asks the Board of Alders to adopt a text amendment to the New Haven Zoning Ordinance to add cultural activities including museums, art galleries, and libraries to the list of permitted as-of-right uses in the Light Industrial (IL) District. Cultural facilities of this type are already permitted as-of-right in every residential zone and every business zone (the BE zone requires a special permit) in the City; this amendment would extend that recognition to the IL zone.

The change establishes that the use type — cultural activity — is compatible with the IL district, leaving all other IL zoning standards intact.

Background

Lost in New Haven, an immersive history museum at 80 Hamilton Street in the Wooster Square/Mill River neighborhood, brought this petition forward. The museum, which opened under a use variance in 2021, is New Haven's first new museum in more than 40 years. It engages visitors — including many classes of schoolchildren — with interactive exhibits tracing New Haven's story from 1638 to the present.

To support its long term success and its planned expansion to the adjacent building at 60 Hamilton Street — including a 11,500 square foot second floor addition proposed for funding through a state DECD Community Investment Fund grant — the museum requires legal certainty that museum use is a permitted right in the IL zone. Variances were obtained for 60 and 80 Hamilton but have been appealed, creating uncertainty that threatens the museum's financing and growth.

While Lost in New Haven's needs prompted this petition, the proposed amendment would benefit all of New Haven's IL zones across 12 Wards and any cultural institution seeking to locate or expand in any of these IL zones.

Affected Wards and Alders

The IL zone exists in twelve wards across New Haven. The alders representing those wards are:

Ward	Alder	Ward	Alder	Ward	Alder
3rd	Angel Hubbard	9th	Caroline T. Smith	16th	Magda A. Natal
4th	Evelyn Rodriguez	10th	Anna M. Festa	22nd	Jeanette L. Morrison
5th	Kampton Singh	13th	Mildred D. Melendez	27th	Richard Furiow
6th	Carmen Rodriguez	14th	Sarah Miller		
8th	Mandy Martinelli				

Five Reasons to Support This Amendment

1. Consistent with Vision 2034 and New Haven's Cultural Equity Plan

The amendment directly advances goals established in New Haven's Vision 2034 Comprehensive Plan and the New Haven Cultural Equity Plan:

- Goal 1 (Cultural Equity Plan): Increase support for arts and culture in New Haven. Strong arts and culture initiatives improve quality of life, contribute to mental well-being, and create workforce development opportunities.
- Goal 3 (Cultural Equity Plan): Support accessible, affordable space for arts and culture across the City — including Strategy 3.2: Repurpose vacant and underutilized spaces for community use.
- Goal 5 (Cultural Equity Plan): Embrace storytelling to build community and share culture, including New Haven's history from diverse and multicultural perspectives.
- Cultural Equity Plan: Expand the footprint of cultural institutions to every corner of the City — moving beyond the downtown concentration to reach the Hill, Fair Haven, Wooster Square, and other neighborhoods where IL zones are located.
- Vision 2034 writes, "Strong arts and culture initiatives improve quality of life, contribute to mental well-being, and create opportunities for education and workforce development." Allowing cultural institutions in an additional zoning district, i.e. the IL District, increases the promotion of arts and culture in New Haven and furthers these goals.
- Strategy 3.2, which is intended to implement Goal 3 of the *Arts & Cultural Identity* Chapter of Vision 2034, states "Repurpose vacant and underutilized space for community use." This strategy notes that "[t]here is vacant and underutilized space located across the City that could be used or converted for use for local artists. This includes vacant and underutilized office and industrial space, institutional space and retail space."
- Vision 2034 Future Land Use Map (p. 183): The amendment is consistent with the City's future land use vision.

2. The IL Zone Has Already Evolved into a Mixed-Use District

The IL zone is no longer exclusively industrial. The Board of Alders has already recognized a wide range of non-industrial uses as compatible and permitted them as of right, including:

- Food stores, pharmacies, barbershops, beauty parlors
- Restaurants and banks
- Gyms and martial arts studios
- Music and dance schools
- Day care centers
- Furniture stores, antique shops, offices

Cultural facilities — museums, art galleries, libraries — are no more disruptive to IL neighbors than the uses already permitted. The City Plan Commission reached precisely this conclusion in its advisory findings, noting that cultural uses produce significantly lower impacts than industrial uses: no heavy truck traffic, no noise, no emissions. The change is an evolutionary step that the IL zone has already taken..

3. Cultural Uses Already Exist in IL Zones Without Conflict

New Haven already has functioning examples of cultural institutions operating successfully in or adjacent to IL-zoned areas, demonstrating there is no incompatibility with neighboring industrial and residential uses:

- Lost in New Haven (80 Hamilton Street) — operating since 2021 under a use variance, no complaints from neighbors or adjacent property owners.
- Erector Square (315 Peck Street) — numerous artist studios in a former light manufacturing building and hosts Open Studios in an IL zone abutting residential areas; fully taxable and positively regarded by neighbors.
- 333 East Street Gallery — former light manufacturing building (built 1900) in an IL zone; taxable and compatible with surrounding uses.

NXTHVN, a creative arts campus in a former industrial property (although not in an IL zone) was cited by the City Plan Commission as a successful cultural reuse.

The adjacent property owners at Lost in New Haven have stated they do not oppose the text change and that both uses can coexist. There have been no complaints regarding any of these cultural uses in relation to neighboring properties.

4. This Change Will Not Displace Industrial Uses or Harm the Tax Base

The text amendment will not displace businesses seeking industrial space and non-profit cultural uses will not reduce the taxable Grand List. The evidence does not support either concern.

Displacement risk is low: New Haven has very little active demand for warehouse and manufacturing space. Letters from commercial real estate broker John Wareck and from the Arts Council of Greater New Haven, and communications from City Economic Development, confirm this. The greater risk is that these buildings remain vacant.

Tax base impact is minimal: Most art galleries and cultural organizations rent space, meaning their landlords continue paying property taxes. Museums that own their buildings are the exception, not the rule — Lost in New Haven is the first new museum in New Haven in more than 40 years. Properties that are redeveloped for cultural uses are typically vacant or underutilized, so the net fiscal impact is positive.

5. Arts and Culture Are an Economic Engine for New Haven

Expanding the geographic footprint of cultural activity — including into IL zones in the Hill, Fair Haven, and Wooster Square — generates measurable economic returns. According to the “Arts & Economic Prosperity 6” study by Americans for the Arts:

\$143.4M

Total economic activity
generated by New
Haven arts sector
(2022)

2,402

Jobs supported in New
Haven

\$112.8M

Personal income
provided to New Haven
residents

\$34.2M

In tax revenue
generated

Cultural institutions also attract visitors who spend at local restaurants, shops, and hotels; draw new residents and businesses; and contribute to New Haven's identity as a livable, vibrant city. Locating these institutions closer to residential neighborhoods serves equity goals while multiplying their community impact.

City Plan Commission Findings

The City Plan Commission findings concluded that the text change:

- Advances Vision 2034 — supports reuse of vacant buildings and expands access to arts citywide
- Is consistent with Charter requirements for zoning changes, including uniformity and promotion of health and general welfare
- Recognizes that cultural uses are already permitted in every residential zone and every business zone in New Haven
- Correctly notes that industrial buildings are well suited for cultural reuse: open floor plans, high ceilings, flexible layouts
- Finds that cultural uses have significantly lower impacts than industrial uses — no heavy truck traffic, no noise, no emissions

Despite these findings, the Commission voted to recommend denial of the amendment as submitted. The three members who voted for denial did so for different reasons, including one preferring to wait for the complete rewrite of the zoning ordinance, one suggesting the uses be allowed by special permit, and one concerned about expansion of non-tax-paying uses which is not a matter for zoning. The Board of Alders has a responsibility to weigh all the factors presented and the authority to approve this text change.

Conclusion

This is a modest, well-supported zoning text update. It recognizes that museums, art galleries, and libraries belong in New Haven's Light Industrial zones — as they already belong in every other zone in the City.

The amendment supports the reuse of vacant and underutilized industrial buildings, expands arts and cultural access to New Haven's neighborhoods, strengthens the City's economic vitality, and fulfills goals that the Board of Alders has already endorsed in Vision 2034 and the Cultural Equity Plan.

We look forward to discussing this with you at the June 23 conversation. .

Contact: Cynthia Bannon, Managing Director, cynthia@lostinnewhaven.org 203-507-2436
Lost in New Haven | 80 Hamilton Street, New Haven, CT 06511 | www.lostinnewhaven.org

VOICES IN SUPPORT

Selected Statements on the Proposed Text Amendment to Allow Cultural Uses in IL Zones
LM-2026-0109 | Board of Alders Legislation Committee | Submitted May 5, 2026

REAL ESTATE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

"The industrial buildings in the LINH neighborhood need to be revived with modern adaptive reuse — there is very little productive industrial use that can occur in LINH's neighborhood that could ever make a difference in today's world. As a commercial real estate owner and broker, I have learned that repurposing old industrial space, which can no longer be used for modern industrial due to its low-ceiling heights, lack of docks, lack of modern HVAC, lack of electrical service, and lack of scale, is an essential task if we hope to breathe life into semi-abandoned neighborhoods."

— **John Wareck**, Managing Broker, Wareck D'Ostilio Real Estate, LLC; Managing Member, Chapel Investment, LLC

"New Haven's extensive cultural offerings are a central reason for the recent, growing demand for rental apartments in the city by young professionals and retirees alike. This has resulted in dramatic increases in the tax base that would not have happened without conscious support for the success of these cultural assets."

— **David I. Newton**, Principal, Elm Advisors, LLC, New Haven

"The challenge we face in our Light Industrial zones is not a clash of sectors, but an issue of vacancy and unrealized potential. IL zones in New Haven provide ample opportunities for solving numerous economic and cultural challenges for the City. These buildings are not meeting the modern needs for manufacturing and warehousing, so they remain empty, non-revenue generating, and deteriorating. We can change that with this policy."

— **Hope Chávez**, Executive Director, Arts Council of Greater New Haven

ARTS, CULTURE & COMMUNITY EQUITY

"Changing this legislation is a strategic move that provides the gentle incentive necessary for thoughtful, community-focused cultural organizations to reuse and preserve vacant IL buildings. By allowing cultural activities as-of-right, we are extending an invitation for creative investment beyond the downtown core and breathing new life into our neighborhoods. We are transforming liabilities (vacant buildings) into community assets: rehearsal studios, performance spaces, galleries, museums, and creative businesses."

— **Hope Chávez**, Executive Director, Arts Council of Greater New Haven

"I am writing in support of the proposed text amendment to allow cultural facilities, including museums, as a permitted use in Industrial Light districts. As Executive Director of Music Haven, a tuition-free after-school music and youth development program serving young people and families across New Haven, I see every day how important access to arts and cultural spaces is for our community. Our students come from neighborhoods throughout the city, and opportunities to engage with arts and culture outside of the downtown core remain limited for many of them."

— **Milda Torres McClain**, Executive Director, Music Haven, 315 Peck Street

"This amendment makes it possible to turn underutilized industrial buildings into spaces that strengthen neighborhoods and expand access to cultural opportunities."

— **Milda Torres McClain**, Executive Director, Music Haven

"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."

— **Clifton Watson, PhD**, Director of Community Partnerships, Wesleyan University; born and raised in Newhallville

"This amendment advances the City's own adopted policy goals regarding arts and culture development. New Haven's Vision 2034 Comprehensive Plan explicitly calls for expanding arts and cultural resources beyond the downtown core and into neighborhoods across the city, improving equity in access to cultural institutions and opportunities. It also calls for the repurposing of outmoded industrial spaces into mixed uses and cultural facilities."

— **David I. Newton**, Principal, Elm Advisors, LLC

COMPATIBILITY OF CULTURAL USES IN IL ZONES

"This is a straightforward policy question: are museums a compatible use in IL zones? In practice, they are low impact — generating less noise, traffic, and disruption than many previous uses that have been allowed as of right. This change does not eliminate industrial zoning — it simply allows a broader range of compatible uses where appropriate."

— **Erik Clemons**, Resident, Westville, New Haven, President and CEO, ConnCORP

"Many IL areas are located next to residential communities, making them ideal for accessible, neighborhood-based cultural and educational uses. From an economic standpoint, active uses matter. Cultural institutions generate visitors, support nearby businesses, and contribute to neighborhood vitality."

— **Erik Clemons**, Westville, New Haven, President and CEO, ConnCORP

"Several of the IL districts are located near residential areas, including Westville, East Rock, and Fair Haven. We have a number of examples of important cultural assets occupying outmoded industrial buildings in New Haven, including Erector Square in the old A.C. Gilbert factory on Peck Street in an IL Zone, and NXT HAVEN in Dixwell."

— **David I. Newton**, Principal, Elm Advisors, LLC

Full letters of support are available in the record submitted to the Legislation Committee. Additional letters available upon request.



June 26, 2026

To the Members of the Board of Alders:

I write in enthusiastic support of the proposed zoning text amendment that would allow cultural activities as-of-right in New Haven's Light Industrial districts.

For over three decades, the International Festival of Arts and Ideas has demonstrated what New Haven already knows: that arts and culture are not mere amenities — they are essential, civic infrastructure. They attract residents and businesses, generate economic growth, and define a city's national identity and reputation. The proposed amendment reflects that understanding, extending to IL zones the same cultural use recognition that every residential and business zone in the city already enjoys.

As a New Havener, I'm proud to add my voice to this important conversation, alongside that of Dr. Roslyn Milstein Meyer, our founding director who also serves as board president of Lost in New Haven. Dr. Meyer's courageous leadership has long guided sustainable arts and culture in this city — from building the Festival into a nationally recognized institution to championing Lost in New Haven as a model for what cultural investment in our neighborhoods can look like. Her support for this amendment is not a gesture — it is the latest expression of a life's work built on the conviction that culture doesn't stop at the edge of a business district, and that New Haven is only as vibrant as its least-served neighborhood.

The proposed is a modest and well-grounded change. The evidence is clear that cultural institutions are compatible neighbors in light industrial areas and are quieter, with less traffic and emissions, than many uses already permitted. Meanwhile, the buildings in question are often vacant and deteriorating — to enable their adaptive reuse for museums, galleries, and libraries is to turn a liability into a valuable, community asset.

The amendment also advances goals the City has already publicly endorsed. *Vision 2034* and the *Cultural Equity Plan* both call for expanding the footprint of arts and culture beyond downtown and into Greater New Haven's neighborhoods. This is a direct path to doing exactly that. I urge the Board to approve this amendment and send a clear signal that New Haven's commitment to culture extends to each resident, and to every corner of this city.

In Community,

nico w. okoro
*Incoming Executive
Director*
The International Festival
of Arts & Ideas
195 Church Street, Floor 1
New Haven, CT 06510

Annie Lin
Board Co-Chair
The International Festival
of Arts & Ideas

Risë Nelson
Board Co-Chair
The International Festival
of Arts & Ideas

Kone, Carolyn W.

Subject:

FW: As of Right Cultural Uses for IL Zone

On 6/28/26, 3:39 AM, "Helen Kauder" <helenkauder@gmail.com <mailto:helenkauder@gmail.com>> wrote:

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



May 4, 2026

Esteemed Members of the Board of Alders,

Executive Director
Hope Chávez

Board of Directors

Chair
Magaly Cajigas

Vice Chair
Shamain McAllister

Treasurer
Rayan Saad

Secretary
Katherine Hsu Hagmann

Dr. Patricia Brett
Elaine Carroll
Joel Dodson
Aneesah Langley
Jeffrey Moreno
Babz Rawls Ivy
Mila Volpe

My name is Hope Chávez and I am the Executive Director of the Arts Council of Greater New Haven. I am writing to share my perspective on the essential value of LM-2026-0109 to permit cultural activities as-of-right in Light Industrial (IL) Districts.

New Haven has long been named the "Cultural Capital of Connecticut." While that is no accident, the legislative priorities of the City do not always align with such a superlative. The community-informed Comprehensive Plan (Vision 2034) demands more collaboration between the arts and city planning. When I talk to our local artisans—the ceramic artists, the jewelry-makers, the small-batch clothing designers—they don't wish for fewer factories; they wish for more local, specialized manufacturing support. Their artistic innovation creates a demand for specialized production, forging a powerful, symbiotic relationship. Our industrial future and our cultural future are not two separate stories; they are interwoven.

The challenge we face in our Light Industrial (IL) zones is not a clash of sectors, but an issue of vacancy and unrealized potential. IL zones in New Haven provide ample opportunities for solving numerous economic and cultural challenges for the City. These buildings are not meeting the modern needs for manufacturing and warehousing, so they remain empty, non-revenue generating, and deteriorating. We can change that with this policy.

I'm aware of some concerns regarding how as-of-right use impacts economic development, traffic, pedestrian safety, and collaboration with abutting neighborhoods. While these concerns are reasonable, the idea that a high volume of cultural nonprofits are poised to instantly buy up all the space is not grounded in reality, nor is the notion that cultural institutions are not inherently value additive for their neighbors. Look at spaces like NXTHVN, Erector Square, and

City Seed. These are spaces of cultural activity and community gathering in reimagined industrial buildings. Their presence in these communities drives economic development, creates safe gathering spaces, and increases opportunities for neighbors to collaborate.

Changing this legislation is a strategic move that provides the gentle incentive necessary for thoughtful, community-focused cultural organizations to reuse and preserve vacant IL buildings. By allowing cultural activities as-of-right, we are extending an invitation for creative investment beyond the downtown core and breathing new life into our neighborhoods. We are transforming liabilities (vacant buildings) into community assets: rehearsal studios, performance spaces, galleries, museums, and creative businesses. When arts and culture thrive, the city stands to gain.

I urge you to approve this petition so we can invest in the long-term, synergistic growth of both industry and culture.

Sincerely,
Hope Chávez

arts council
GREATER NEW HAVEN

70 Audubon Street New Haven CT 06510 | 203.772.2788 | newhavenarts.org



HOULIHAN LAWRENCE

WARECK D'OSTILIO

May 4, 2026

To Board of Alders Legislation Committee/City Plan Commission,

New Haven is a great city of great non-profits. The Lost in New Haven (LINH) Museum is an absolute gem that has begun to enhance the fabric of life in Greater New Haven.

The industrial buildings in the LINH neighborhood need to be revived with modern adaptive reuse - there is very little productive industrial use that can occur in LINH's neighborhood that could ever make a difference in today's world (or tomorrow's world). We have seen adaptive reuse of loft buildings and former factories into residential apartments in the neighborhood. This has provided much-needed activity and life that serves to revive the city.

I have lived and worked in real estate in New Haven for all of my 56 years. I can't imagine New Haven without it's great non-profits and museums. Can anyone imagine New Haven without the Yale Art Gallery, the Yale British Center for Arts, or the Peabody Museum? These institutions are known and respected world-wide. They bring tens of thousands of visitors to our city each month. They provide an essential boost to our economy. LINH will do that too but we need to support its growth.

As a commercial real estate owner and broker, I have learned that repurposing old industrial space, which can no longer be used for modern industrial due to its low-ceiling heights, lack of docks, lack of modern HVAC, lack of electrical service, and lack of scale, is an essential task if we hope to breath life into semi-abandoned neighborhoods. Supporting LINH's needs is a rare multi-generational opportunity to accomplish that.

As a New Haven resident, business owner, and commercial real estate owner, I fully support the proposed zoning amendment to permit art galleries, libraries, and museums "as of right" in the Light Industrial (IL) District.

Sincerely,

John Wareck

Managing Broker, Wareck D'Ostilio Real Estate, LLC

Managing Member, Chapel Investment, LLC

Kone, Carolyn W.

Subject:

FW: As of Right Cultural Uses for IL Zone

On 6/28/26, 3:39 AM, "Helen Kauder" <helenkauder@gmail.com <mailto:helenkauder@gmail.com>> wrote:

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.

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Thank you for your support,

Helen Kauder
Former Executive Director, Artspace New Haven



HOULIHAN LAWRENCE
WARECK D'OSTILIO

May 4, 2026

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As a New Haven resident, business owner, and commercial real estate owner, I fully support the proposed zoning amendment to permit art galleries, libraries, and museums "as of right" in the Light Industrial (IL) District.

Sincerely,

John Wareck

Managing Broker, Wareck D'Ostilio Real Estate, LLC

Managing Member, Chapel Investment, LLC

John Wareck
Managing Broker

John Wareck
Managing Member

John Wareck
Managing Member

John Wareck
Managing Member

John Wareck
Managing Member

Clifton Watson, PhD
57 Winthrop Terrace
Meriden, CT 06451

Dear New Haven Board of Alders,

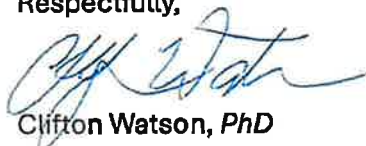
My name is Clifton Watson. I was born and raised in the Newhallville section of the city. I am currently the Director of Community Partnerships at Wesleyan University. I am writing to share my thoughts and express my support of LM 2026-0109 to permit cultural activities as-of-right in Light Industrial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

Kone, Carolyn W.

From: Misty Maza <MMaza@newhavenct.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, May 6, 2026 10:18 AM
To: Kone, Carolyn W.
Subject: Fw: Letter support from Erik Clemons

EXTERNAL EMAIL

Received

	<i>Misty Maza (She/They)</i> Legislative Aide II Email: mmaza@newhavenct.gov Phone: 203.946.7288 165 Church Street New Haven, Connecticut 06510 www.newhavenct.gov Schedule a Meeting
---	---

From: Roslyn Meyer <roslynmm@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 5:56 PM
To: Carolyn W. Kone <ckone@bswlaw.com>; Misty Maza <MMaza@newhavenct.gov>
Subject: Letter support from Erik Clemons

You don't often get email from roslynmm@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please be cautious

This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Dear Legislative Committee,

I'm writing to urge your support for the zoning text amendment allowing museums as a permitted use in Industrial Light (IL) districts.

This is a straightforward policy question: are museums compatible use in IL zones?
In practice, they are low impact—generating less noise, traffic, and disruption than many previous uses that have been allowed as of right.

This is the amendment also aligns directly with Vision 2034, which calls for expanding arts and cultural access beyond downtown, and into neighborhoods.

Many IL areas are located next to residential communities, making them ideal for accessible, neighborhood-based cultural and educational uses.

From an economic standpoint, active uses matter. Cultural institutions generate visitors,

support nearby businesses and contribute to neighborhood vitality.

This change does not eliminate industrial zoning—it simply allows a broader range of compatible uses where appropriate.

I respectfully ask for your support.

Yours Truly,

Erik Clemons
21 Hard Street 06515 (Westville)

Kone, Carolyn W.

From: Cynthia Bannon <Cynthia@lostinnewhaven.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 5:51 PM
To: Kone, Carolyn W.
Subject: Fw: Lost In New Haven

EXTERNAL EMAIL

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Cynthia Bannon <Cynthia@lostinnewhaven.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 5:42:30 PM
To: jf farnamllc.com <jf@farnamllc.com>
Subject: Fw: Lost In New Haven

I'm at City Hall with Carolyn, she did not see this letter. She was wondering if it's not too late if you can print it before you come here. I know it was emailed to Misty Maza.

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

From: David Newton <davidinewton49@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 5, 2026 2:41:05 PM
To: mmaza@newhavenct.gov <mmaza@newhavenct.gov>
Cc: Cynthia Bannon <Cynthia@lostinnewhaven.org>
Subject: Lost In New Haven

Dear Members of the Legislation Committee,

I am writing in support of the text amendment to allow cultural facilities, including museums, as a permitted use in Industrial Light (IL) districts. I write as a long time New Haven citizen and engaged community member as well as a Proprietor of the New Haven Green.

This amendment advances the City's own adopted policy goals regarding arts and culture development.

New Haven's Vision 2034 Comprehensive Plan explicitly calls for expanding arts and cultural resources beyond the downtown core and into neighborhoods across the city, improving equity in access to cultural institutions and opportunities. It also calls for the repurposing of outmoded industrial spaces into mixed uses and cultural facilities.

Similarly, the City's Cultural Equity Plan identifies the historic concentration of cultural assets downtown and emphasizes the need to extend arts and cultural opportunities into neighborhoods, particularly those with large Black and Brown populations that have historically had less access.

We have a number of examples of important cultural assets occupying outmoded industrial buildings in New Haven, including Erector Square in the old A.C. Gilbert factory on Peck Street in an IL Zone and NXT HAVEN in Dixwell. Several of the IL districts are located near residential areas, including Westville, East Rock, and Fair Haven.

New Haven's extensive cultural offerings are a central reason for the recent, growing demand for rental apartments in the city by young professionals and retirees alike. This has resulted in dramatic increases in the tax base that would not have happened without conscious support for the success of these cultural assets.

Allowing Lost in New Haven to expand as-of-right will allow many other residents access to the museum's collection. This will lead to more paying visitors, as well as more opportunities for field trips, and community based events.

The proposed zone change is a reasonable, forward-looking policy that will help strengthen neighborhoods across New Haven, increase New Haven's role as a cultural hub, and build the City's economy.

I respectfully urge you to support the amendment.

Sincerely,
David I. Newton

Elm Advisors, LLC
110 Whitney Ave.
New Haven, CT 06510
203 980 8781



Board of Directors

Marc Mann, Chair
Fatima Rojas, Co-Chair
Mary Morrison, Secretary
Tyler Yanosy, Treasurer
Andrew Bedford
Anna Garsten
Dwayne Hicks
Wendy Marans
Ian Melchinger
Noel Mitchell
Peter Sipple
Dash (Amanda) Watts

Executive Director

Milda Torres McClain

Haven String Quartet

Yaira Matyakubova, violin
Patrick Doane, violin
Unda Numagami, viola
Philip Boulanger, cello

Resident Musician

Jacob Wang, piano

Teaching Faculty

Miles Willson-Tolliver, Choir
Jillian Emerson, Orchestra

315 Peck Street, Box A10
New Haven, CT 06513
203-745-9030
www.musichavenct.org
info@musichavenct.org

May 5, 2026

Dear Members of the Legislation Committee,

I am writing in support of the proposed text amendment to allow cultural facilities, including museums, as a permitted use in Industrial Light (IL) districts.

As Executive Director of Music Haven, a tuition-free after-school music and youth development program serving young people and families across New Haven, I see every day how important access to arts and cultural spaces is for our community. Our students come from neighborhoods throughout the city, and opportunities to engage with arts and culture outside of the downtown core remain limited for many of them.

New Haven's Vision 2034 Comprehensive Plan calls for expanding arts and cultural resources into neighborhoods across the city, and the Cultural Equity Plan emphasizes the need to increase access for communities that have historically been underserved. This amendment is a meaningful step toward making those goals a reality.

We have seen firsthand how valuable it can be when young people have access to creative spaces that are close to where they live. Expanding the use of existing spaces for cultural purposes not only supports organizations like ours, but also creates more opportunities for students and families to experience, learn from, and participate in the arts.

This amendment makes it possible to turn underutilized industrial buildings into spaces that strengthen neighborhoods and expand access to cultural opportunities. I respectfully urge you to support this amendment.

Sincerely,

Milda Torres McClain

Milda Torres McClain

Executive Director

Music Haven, 315 Peck Street, New Haven, CT 06513

New Haven Board of Alders,
Legislation Committee
June 30, 2026

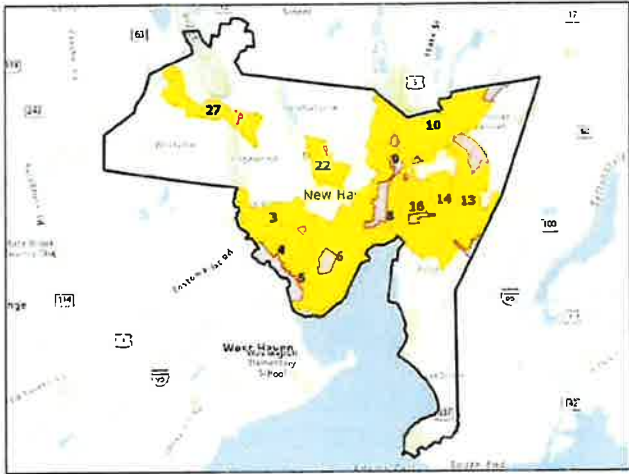
**ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO ALLOW CULTURAL
ACTIVITIES IN THE IL DISTRICT**

UPDATE ON OUTREACH EFFORTS

1

**Current
IL Zones
across
12 Wards**

Light Industrial Zones in New Haven



Legend

- City of New Haven
- Light Industry Zones
- Wards

Affected Wards and Alders

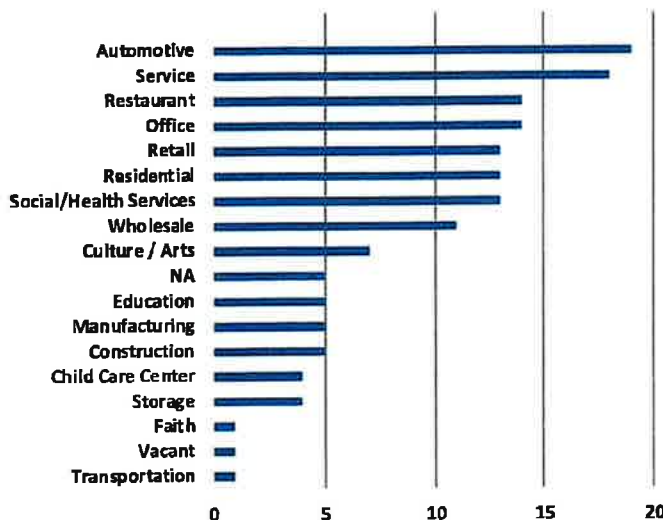
3rd Ward	- Angel Hubbard
4th Ward	- Evelyn Rodriguez
5th Ward	- Kampton Singh
6th Ward	- Carmen Rodriguez
8th Ward	- Mandy Martinelli
9th Ward	- Caroline T. Smith
10th Ward	- Anna M. Festa
13th Ward	- Mildred D. Melend
14th Ward	- Sarah Miller
16th Ward	- Magda A. Natal
22nd Ward	- Jeanette L. Morris
27th Ward	- Richard Furlow

2

Analyzed All IL Zone Businesses

Found very
diverse set of
businesses -
very few
industrial uses

Business Types in IL Zone, New Haven, 2026



3

Outreach and Engagement Effort since 5-5-26 Hearing

■ Mailed and emailed information package to 12 Alders with IL Zones in their wards

- Detailed map
- Memo explaining change
- List of properties in IL zone
- Copy of Petition
- Invitation to a conversation at Lost in New Haven June 23



80 Hamilton Street, New Haven, CT 06511

June 8, 2026

Alder Meghan A. Natar

Ward 18

225 Exchange Street

New Haven, CT 06511-3810

Dear Alder Natar:

We are writing to invite you to a conversation about a proposed amendment that would allow cultural facilities — museums, art galleries, and libraries — to sit right in New Haven's Light Industrial (IL) Districts. The conversation will take place at the **Lost in New Haven Museum**, 80 Hamilton Street, on Monday, June 23, 2026 at 5:00 PM. We are writing to you because you have an IL Zone within your Ward. We are also asking the other Alders who also have IL Districts in their Wards.

We have enclosed a Ward map showing the IL-zoned parcel in your Ward and a list of properties in the IL zone. The IL Zone in Ward 18 is between Chapel and Penn Streets, east of James St (see map). We have also included a summary of the key policy arguments in support of the amendment and a copy of the full petition as submitted.

We believe this amendment is consistent with New Haven's Vision 2034 Comprehensive Plan and New Haven Cultural Equity Plan, and will be not only be of assistance to Lost in New Haven but also be beneficial to the neighborhoods by bringing cultural activities closer to the neighborhoods at lower costs than would be possible in downtown and also by making vacant older industrial buildings that are well suited for arts and museums due to their open spaces, high ceilings, and strong floors.

We want to hear your perspective about the proposed amendment and to answer any questions that you may have. Also, if you would like, we can offer a tour of our Museum.

We also want to alert you to a public hearing before the Board of Alders Legislation Committee June 28, 2026 at 6:00 pm in the Aldermanic Chambers.

We value the opportunity to meet with you, and if June 23rd is not convenient for you, please let us know so we can schedule a time and place to discuss the amendment that works for you.

We hope you will join us on June 23rd or otherwise be in touch with any questions about this proposal.

Please RSVP by June 18 to me at quynh@lostinnewhaven.org or call 203-567-2436.

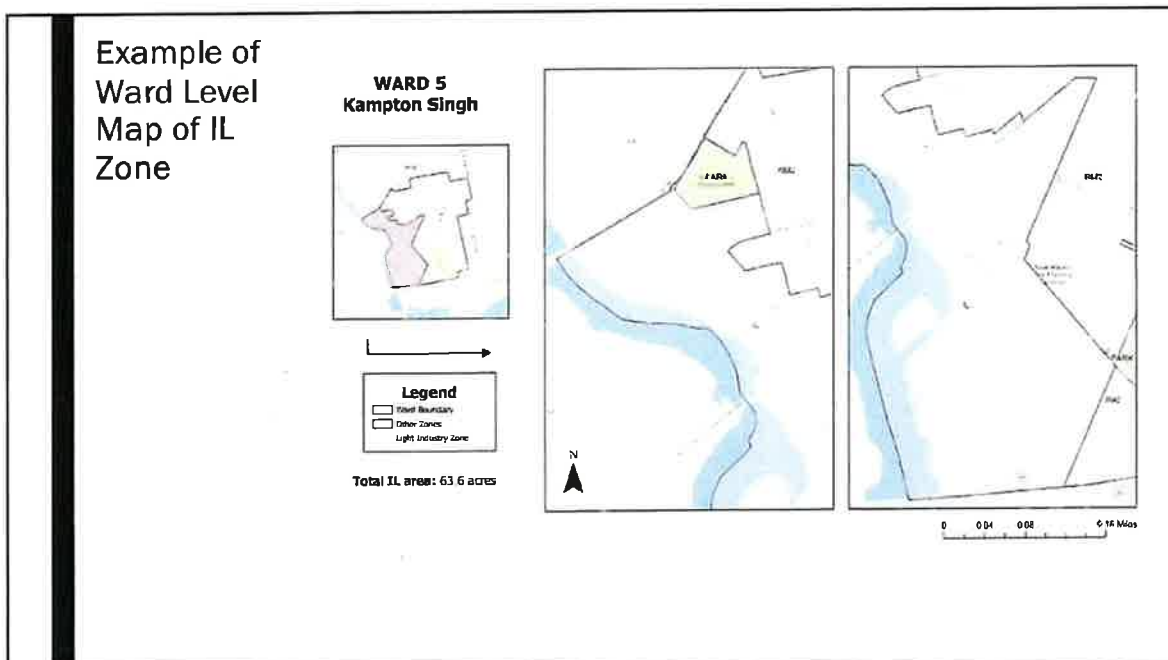
With appreciation,

Quynhannon
Managing Director, Lost in New Haven

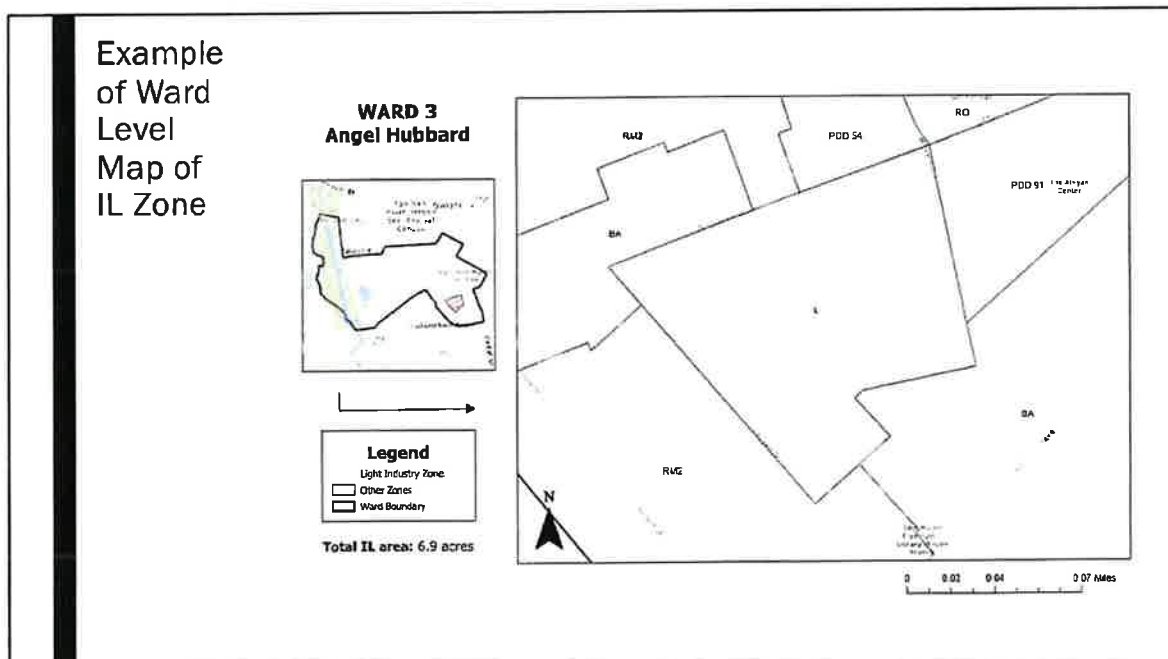
Enclosures:

- IL Zone Maps — Citywide and Your Ward
- Listing of Properties in the IL zone in your Ward
- Summary of Proposed Text Amendment to Allow Cultural Use in IL Zones
- Full Proposed Text Amendment

4



5



6

Outreach and Engagement Effort since 5-5-26 Hearing (2)

- Hosted two Alder meetings at Lost in New Haven in person or by zoom (June 23, June 25)
- Called 12 Alders with IL Zones to see if they had any questions
 - *Conversations with 4 Alders; left messages with others (Singh, Melendez, Miller, Smith)*

7

Outreach and Engagement Effort since 5-5-26 Hearing (3)

- Attended
***Downtown/Wooster Square
Community Mgmt Team
Meeting, June 9, 2026***
- Well-attended
- Support expressed; no
vote taken

LOST IN NEW HAVEN &
PROPOSED ZONING TEXT
AMENDMENT

Downtown Wooster Square Community Management Team
June 9, 2026



8

Expressions of Support

- Hope Chávez, Executive Director, Arts Council of Greater New Haven
- Milda Torres McClain, Executive Director, Music Haven
- Helen Kauder, Arts Leader
- Marcella Monk Flake, Monk STEAM Collective
- Clifton Watson, PhD, Director of Community Partnerships, Wesleyan University; born and raised in Newhallville
- Erik Clemons, Resident, Westville, New Haven, President and CEO, ConnCORP
- David Newton, David I. Newton, Principal, Elm Advisors, LLC, New Haven, Civic Leader
- John Wareck, Managing Broker, Wareck D'Ostilio Real Estate, LLC

9

Six Reasons to Support This Amendment

1. Consistent with Vision 2034 and New Haven's Cultural Equity Plan
2. The IL Zone Has Already Evolved Into a Mixed-Use District
3. Cultural Uses Already Exist in IL Zones Without Conflict
4. Zone Change will support development of underutilized buildings
5. This Change Will Not Displace Industrial Uses or Harm the Tax Base
6. Arts and Culture are an Economic Engine for New Haven and promote safety in the neighborhood

10

Conclusion

This is a **minor zoning text update** that supports reuse of vacant buildings, expands cultural access, and promotes the economic vitality of New Haven

It also aligns with the City's Vision 2034 and Cultural Equity Plan

All affected Alders were engaged and provided opportunity to comment

11



THANK YOU

12