



NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN DEPARTMENT

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May 25, 2022

Honorable Tyisha Walker-Myers, President
Board of Alders
City of New Haven
165 Church Street
New Haven, CT 06510

RE:

ORDINANCE BY THE NEW HAVEN BOARD OF ALDERS ESTABLISHING A TEMPORARY TWELVE (12) MONTH MORATORIUM ON THE SUBMISSION AND ACCEPTANCE OF APPLICATIONS FOR SITE PLANS, VARIANCES, SPECIAL EXCEPTIONS, SPECIAL PERMITS, AND REZONING AMENDMENTS WITHIN THE LONG WHARF RESPONSIBLE GROWTH PLAN AREA (“MORATORIUM AREA”); PROVIDING FOR AUTHORITY; LEGISLATIVE FINDINGS OF FACT; DEFINITIONS; MORATORIUM AREA; TEMPORARY MORATORIUM IMPOSED; DURATION OF TEMPORARY MORATORIUM; AND SEVERABILITY.

Dear President Walker-Myers;

Historically, the Long Wharf area developed as an industrial waterfront where marine and industrial land uses flourished due to the maritime activity located along the Long Island Sound. These land uses consisted of water-borne shipping lanes for cargo and fishing. However since the 1960's, global economic competitiveness related to labor costs, land availability, and transcontinental logistics has shifted the nature of maritime activity. This creates new opportunities for maritime areas to be re-visioned to meet the needs of a changing economy and reconsidering how we value and develop water adjacent lands. The City's Comprehensive Plan of Development Vision 2025 acknowledges this by stating “As manufacturing employment has dropped within the city over the past 40 years, former manufacturing buildings in the Long Wharf area have increasingly become the focus for large-scale retail, education, and health services uses, such as IKEA and the future Jordan's Furniture at opposite ends of Sargent Drive.”

To address the opportunities along waterfront, the Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan (the “Plan”) was adopted in 2019 as part of the New Haven Comprehensive Plan of Development (New Haven Comprehensive Plan-Vision 2025). The Plan supports the improved streetscapes and waterfront connectivity discussed in the Vision 2025 Plan and further envisions transforming the industrial uses along Long Wharf into a series of diverse and vibrant mixed-use communities with residential, commercial and recreational opportunities. The Plan addresses the area's resilience against future climate-change induced weather events and sea level rise; needed

infrastructure improvements to support new development; and the anticipated costs and revenues associated with the proposed development.

While the City's Comprehensive Plan of Development suggests such transformation for economic, environmental, and social sustainability, the current zoning in the Long Wharf area was prescribed in the 1960's. This 1960's model supported greater industrial use along the waterfront. As a result, the area is currently under an industrial zoning designation. Given the proximity of Interstate 95 and Interstate 91, there are a number of industrial land uses seeking to occupy the City's waterfront space including but not limited to gas stations and truck repair facilities that are not aligned with the Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan. The City's zoning ordinance is an important tool to guide private investment towards the City's goals for Long Wharf.

Developing a comprehensive, appropriate, and forward-thinking zoning plan for Long Wharf will require time, ingenuity, and evaluation. The City Plan Department is proposing a twelve-month moratorium on development in the Long Wharf district to afford ample time to review existing planning studies, evaluate current market trends, as well as create and adopt appropriate zoning for the area.

This moratorium aligns with the City's Comprehensive Plan of Development because it allows for adequate time for the City to:

- Create a framework for the redevelopment of the Long Wharf District into a more mixed, denser urban commercial and coastal district
- Enact zoning recommendations based on the Long Wharf Responsible Growth Plan
- Ensure that future development is focused on the key principles outlined in the plan including: emphasizing the public realm, integrating existing buildings and industries, staged redevelopment, equitable development, creating a new "front door", transit orientation, climate resilience, creating jobs, reconnecting the city to the waterfront, and serving as a new major area for new development.
- Prioritize cultural and environmental enhancements to the Vietnam Veterans' Long Wharf Park
- Consider land constraints including flood and coastal resilience as well as remediation of brownfields and propose interim uses for such sites

The Board of Alders has from time to time issued moratoriums on land use types or zoning elements when it was determined that such a moratorium was in the public interest. We hope you will consider this request and we would be happy to address any concerns you may have.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Laura E. Brown
Executive Director

Cc: Albert Lucas, Director of Legislative Services

