

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **446A BLAKE STREET**
 MBLU: 372 1159 00101
 Owner/Applicant: 446A Blake LLC; **Agent:** James Segaloff

Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment

Modify and amend PDD 103 to increase the total number of residential dwelling units in the PDD from 293 to 437 for conversion over time, of the existing office building at 446A Blake Street to dwelling units, and construction of two additional structures for the remaining dwelling units.

Report: 1608-07
Advice: APPROVAL

Project: 446A Blake Street apartments

Address: 446A Blake Street, MBLU: 372 1159 00101

Site Area: ± 1.89 acres situated in the Westville neighborhood

Proposed Amendment: Modify and amend PDD 103 to increase the total number of residential dwelling units in the PDD from 293 to 437 for conversion over time, of the existing office building at 446A Blake Street to dwelling units, and construction of two additional structures for the remaining dwelling units.

Proposed Construction: Conversion of the existing office building to dwelling units, and construction of two additional structures for the remaining dwelling units.

Applicant/Owner: 446A BLAKE LLC
Agent: James Segaloff, Susman, Duffy & Segaloff, P.C.
Architect: Gregg, Wies, & Gardner Architects
Engineer: Westcott and Mapes, INC

SUBMISSION

Submission dated and received January 27, 2022. Referred to the City Plan Commission on February 7, 2022.

Planned Development District Amendment, received by the Board of Alders; including: Transmittal Letter from Susman, Duffy & Segaloff P.C, Petition for Planned Development District Modification, Architecture Drawings, Site Drawings, Stormwater Management Plan, Coastal Area Management Report, Development Application Worksheet and Site forms, Application Fee for Zoning Text Amendment: \$1,500.

BACKGROUND/EXISTING CONDITIONS

PDD 103 History:

A. February 19, 2003: Pursuant to the application of NHM LLC, the City Plan Commission approved general plans to construct 293 dwelling units on the 7.66 acre parcel, known as Wintergreen of Westville, and also approved the General Plans for renovations of the historic three-story brick structure on the 1.89 acre parcel as office space.

B. May 8, 2003: The Board of Aldermen adopted the findings of the City Plan Commission and approved PDD #103.

C. November 8, 2003: the City Plan Commission approved Detailed Plans for 293 new dwelling units and 530 parking spaces on the 7.66 acre parcel, and 36,000 sq ft of renovated and reused office space for the brick structure on the 1.89 acre parcel.

D. April 1, 2005: per a Special Warranty Deed, 446 Blake Street was split into two parcels:

- a. 446B Blake Street containing 7.66 acres which included 293 market rate structures, known as Wintergreen at Westville.
- b. The Subject Property, 446A Blake Street containing 1.89 acres which included the office building.

E. March 21, 2007: 446A Blake Street: The City Plan Commission acting in regard to “Planned Development Action and Coastal Site Plan Review”, approved Detailed Plans for the completion and rehabilitation of the historic three-story brick structure at the Subject Property. The building has 36,000 square feet of office space with 107 parking spaces. Coastal Site Plan Review was conducted and approved.

Proposed Construction: 446A BLAKE LLC, owner of 446A Blake Street containing 1.89 acres, petitions to modify PDD 103 and to amend the PDD, to permit a total of 437 dwelling units which number recognizes the 293 existing units at Wintergreen at Westville and permits the requested 144 dwelling units at the Subject Property. The Owner proposes that 7.5% of the 144 units will be deed-restricted to be affordable at 80% of the area median income (“AMI”) for forty years. Construction of the 144 units includes converting the existing historic office building into a mixed-use building and construction of additional residential structures.

PARKING, LOADING AND TRAFFIC

A Traffic Assessment, conducted by Mitchell Traffic Engineering LLC, has been submitted as part of the overall application and is under review by the Department of Transportation, Traffic and Parking (TTP’s review of the study will be reported to the Board or Alders prior to final vote on the proposed PDD amendment).

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

CPC Staff Report #1332-01, recommending approval of the creation of PDD #103, stated, “The site presents an unusual opportunity to re-develop a large site within an area of New Haven that has historic character...and good access to the amenities of urban life, as well as immediate access to City and State parks at West Rock. The development is of sufficient size to create a new residential community with a strong identity with Westville Village.”

Since the creation of the PDD, the 446B Blake Street parcel has been built out with residential apartments and the current proposed amendment to increase the total number of residential units on the PDD is harmonious with the original vision for the PDD and the existing uses on the site.

The existing brick factory building on the site is listed in the New Haven Historic Resource Inventory, listing #2958, as a colonial revival style building built in stages between 1906 and 1948. The building was previously converted to office space (CPC Report #1401-05 from March 2007). The current proposal preserves the majority of the building, with the exception of the rear addition to the southwest of the property which will be demolished, with the chimney stack left intact.

PROPOSED USES – DEVIATIONS FROM UNDERLYING ZONING REQUIREMENTS

The underlying zones of PDD#103 are IL (Light Industrial) and RM-1 (Low-Middle Density Residential). In the existing PDD#103, stated uses include parking, office space, residential use.

The applicant is amending and restating, in their entirety, the zoning deviations for the entire PDD with this application, as follows:

ZONING TABLE

BLAKE STREET APARTMENTS			
Property Address:	446A Blake Street		
Zoning District:	PDD 103		
DESCRIPTION	REQUIRED OR ALLOWED	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Use	Dwelling units multi-family	Professional Offices	Dwelling units multi-family
Property Area		82,072 s.f.	82,072 s.f.
Zoning Lot Area		76,241 s.f. (1)	76,241 s.f. (1)
Number of Dwelling Units		0	144
Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit		N/A	529 s.f./DU (2)
Impervious Surface		89.4 % (3)	74.6 % (4)
Front Yard		0.4 ft.	0.4 ft.
Side Yards		57 ft. and 148.8 ft.	79.8 ft and 9.7 ft.
Rear Yard		38.4 ft.	21.2 ft.
Building Height		38 ft. +/-	70 ft. +/-
Parking	one-half per dwelling unit Min. Req. Parking = 144 units x 0.5 = 72	104	85
ADA Parking	Total Parking range 76 to 100 Min. Req. ADA spaces = 4 (of which 1 is req. to be a van)	4	5 (4 cars and 1 van)
Bldg. Coverage		30.0% (5)	35.3% (6)
Open Space	250 sq.ft. per dwelling unit = 144 units x 250 s.f./unit = 36,000 s.f.	N/A	36,004 s.f. (7)

ZONING TABLE NOTES:

- (1) Zoning Lot Area = 82,072 s.f. - 5,831 s.f. (West River Area) = 76,241 s.f.
 (2) Lot Area per Dwelling Unit = 76,241 s.f. / 144 Units = 529 s.f./unit
 (3) Existing Impervious Surface Area = 82,072 s.f. - 8,676 s.f. = 73,396 s.f. Exist. % Imperv. = (73,396 s.f. / 82,072 s.f.) x 100 = 89.4 %
 (4) Proposed Impervious Surface Area = 82,072 s.f. - 20,830 s.f. = 61,242 s.f. Prop. % Imperv. = (61,242 s.f. / 82,072 s.f.) x 100 = 74.6%
 (5) Existing Building Foot Print Area = 24,644 s.f. Ex. Bldg. Coverage = (24,644 s.f. / 82,072 s.f.) x 100 = 30.0 %
 (6) Proposed Buildings Foot Print Area = 29,002 s.f. Prop. Bldg. Coverage = (29,002 s.f. / 82,072 s.f.) x 100 = 35.3 %
 (7) Open Space = 12,416 s.f. Lawn/landscape + 1,494 Conc. Pavers + 5,579 Conc. Sidewalks + 7,915 s.f. balconies + 8,600 s.f. Roof Top = 36,004 s.f.

NEW HAVEN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: SUBMISSION MEETS REQUIREMENTS

New Haven Vision 2025, Section IV: Housing & Neighborhood Planning Goals addressed by this project include:

Promoting the revitalization of residential areas clustered around significant public spaces, including Trowbridge Square (potential local historic district), Jocelyn Square, Criscuolo Park, and job centers, including Science Park, SCSU, River Street, and Mill River.

Land use changes are recommended along Whalley Avenue, near Westville Village, to promote dense, mixed-use developments with reduced parking requirements

NEW HAVEN ZONING ORDINANCE: SUBMISSION MEETS REQUIREMENTS

Where the proposed modifications to an existing PDD concern more than the bulk and placement of structures and the size and shape of lots, the applicant is required to submit the Application and General Plans to the Board of Aldermen who will act upon the application as a proposed amendment to the zoning ordinance in accordance with Section 65(d)(2) of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance:

- (2) In any other case, the Application and General Plans shall be filed with the Board of Aldermen and acted upon as a proposed amendment to this ordinance. If such application and General Plans are approved by the Board of Alders, following a favorable recommendation by the City Plan Commission and after an advisory report from the Department of Traffic and Parking regarding the traffic impact study, upon specific findings that each of the objectives stated in subsection 65(a) above will be met, such approval shall be construed to amend this ordinance insofar (and only insofar) as specific deletions, additions and changes are made which are related to the land and structures in the tract, and the tract shall be designated as a separate Planned Development District provided that the requirements of subsection 65(e) below are met.

CRITERIA FOR A PDD:

- (a) *Objectives.* The provisions of this section are to be applied in instances where tracts of land of considerable size are developed, redeveloped or renewed as integrated and harmonious units, and where the overall design of such units is so outstanding as to warrant modification of the standards contained elsewhere in this ordinance. A planned development, to be eligible under this section, must be:

STANDARDS

- ☒ (1) In accordance with the comprehensive plans of the city, including all plans for redevelopment and renewal;
- ☒ (2) Composed of such **uses**, and in such proportions, as are most appropriate and necessary for the integrated functioning of the planned development and for the city;
- ☒ (3) So designed in its space allocation, orientation, texture, materials, landscaping and other features as to produce an environment of stable and desirable character, complementing the design and values of the surrounding neighborhood, and showing such unusual merit as to reflect credit upon the developer and upon the city; and
- ☒ (4) So arranged as to provide a minimum of 250 square feet of usable open space per dwelling unit on the tract, except 125 square feet in the case of elderly housing units, subject to the specific minimum standards enumerated in section 15(a)(1)g. of this ordinance.

CHARTER OF THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN: SUBMISSION MEETS REQUIREMENTS

CRITERIA FOR ZONING AMENDMENTS:

ARTICLE XIII. HISTORIC AND SPECIAL ACT PROVISION OF THE CHARTER

SEC. 2 PLANNING AND ZONING:

- (B.) *Zoning authority of Board of Alders.* The Board of Alders is authorized, by Ordinance, to regulate the height and bulk of structures to be erected and to limit the use of lot areas; the minimum areas or dimensions of rear, side and front yards or outer and inner courts and other open spaces within and surrounding any structure; the density of population and the location and use of buildings, structures and land for trade, industry, residence or other purposes; to classify, regulate and restrict the location of trades and industries and the location of structures designed for special uses; to divide the City of New Haven into districts of such number, shape and areas as may be best suited to carry out the provisions of this act.

STANDARDS

- ☒ (i) uniform for each class of buildings or structures;
- ☒ (ii) made in accordance with the comprehensive plan;
- ☒ (iii) designed to lessen congestion in the streets, secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers, promote health and the general welfare, provide adequate light and air, prevent the overcrowding of land, avoid undue concentration of population, facilitate the adequate provisions for transportation, water, sewerage, parks and other public requirements; and
- ☒ (iv) made with reasonable consideration as to the character of the proposed District and its peculiar suitability for particular uses and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the City.

(C.) *Zoning regulations to conform to comprehensive plan; purposes; factors considered.* Such regulations shall be made:

STANDARDS

- ☒ (i) in accordance with a comprehensive plan and shall be designed to lessen congestion in streets;
- ☒ (ii) to secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers;
- ☒ (iii) to promote health and the general welfare;
- ☒ (iv) to provide adequate light and air;
- ☒ (v) to prevent the overcrowding of land;
- ☒ (vi) to avoid undue concentration of population;
- ☒ (vii) to facilitate the adequate provisions for transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks and other public requirements
- ☒ (viii) with reasonable consideration, as to the character of the district and its peculiar suitability for particular uses and;
- ☒ (ix) with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout such municipality

CONNECTICUT GENERAL STATUTES: SUBMISSION MEETS REQUIREMENTS

STATE CRITERIA FOR FLOATING ZONES:

CHAPTER 24. ZONING

SEC. 8-2M FLOATING AND OVERLAY ZONES AND FLEXIBLE ZONING DISTRICTS:

The zoning authority of any municipality that (1) was incorporated in 1784, (2) has a mayor and board of alderman form of government, and (3) exercises zoning power pursuant to a special act, may provide for floating and overlay zones and flexible zoning districts, including, but not limited to, planned development districts, planned development units, special design districts and planned area developments. The regulations shall establish standards for such zones and districts. Flexible zoning districts established under such regulations:

- ☒ (i) shall be designed for the betterment of the municipality and the floating and overlay zones and neighborhood in which they are located;
- ☒ (ii) shall not establish a residential zone that is less restrictive with respect to uses than the "underlying zone" of the flexible zoning district;
- ☒ (iii) shall not authorize a use or expansion of a pre-existing, nonconforming use where the underlying zone is a residential zone

FINDINGS AND ADVICE

Based on the information above, it is the recommendation of the Commission that the zoning ordinance text amendment is in compliance with the standards and requirements of Article XIII Sec. 2 of the Charter of the City of New Haven, Sec. 65 of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance, and Chapter 24 Sec 8-2m of the Connecticut General Statutes and should be approved. The applicant should work with the City on improvements related to pedestrian safety, particularly with respect to safely accessing outdoor recreation amenities across Blake Street.

ADOPTED: June 15, 2022
Leslie Radcliffe
Chair

ATTEST: 
Laura E Brown
Executive Director, City Plan Department