

PAD MEETING MINUTES

March 16, 2022

PRESENT: Hon. Gerald M. Antunes, BoA; Anna Festa, BoA; Steve Fontana, Economic Development; Nate Hougrand, City Plan; Evan Trachten, LCI; Clay Williams, Business Development

Absent: Maurine Villani, Tax Office.

Guest: Laura Brown, City Plan

Meeting called to order at 3:10 PM

A motion to approve the PAD minutes from December 15, 2021 was made by Nate Hougrand, seconded by Steve Fontana, minutes approved unanimously.

New Business

885 Congress Avenue

Evan told the PAD committee this is a small parcel and isn't suitable for residential development. LCI is proposing to sell this sliver lot to an owner occupant at 889 Congress Avenue. The adjacent property at 889 Congress does not have any off-street parking. This lot was used by the previous owner, the lot is partially paved. Given the lot is quite small the City didn't offer to split this parcel with other adjacent property which is a large commercial building (that was once a roller-skating rink, it also has blight issues with graffiti). The lot acts a good buffer between the properties. Evan told the committee that Alder Rodriguez is in support of the sliver lot sale as proposed. Nate asked if this lot would be open to the public? Evan told the committee it is for private use in conjunction with 889 Congress Avenue. Alder Antunes asked if a garage could be built on this parcel. Evan told the committee a garage is permitted subject to zoning review prior to the issuance of a building permit. This is a text-book sliver lot sale in keeping with our previous sliver lot sales. Evan also noted that the commercial building owns a few feet of the land on the side of their building, so they have access to this area if they needed to put up a ladder to get on their roof.

A motion was made by Steve Fontana to approve the item, seconded by Alder Antunes, roll call was taken, Approved unanimously.

27 Frank Street

Evan told the committee LCI proposes to sell this small vacant single-family property to Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven, Inc (NHS) for \$1,000. They will rehabilitate the property and sell it to an owner-occupant with a minimum 10 year occupancy period. The parcel of land is also quite small. The property was offered to the public in 2019 via RFP but there were no offers. There was also a supportive housing proposal, but it didn't receive support from the community. This portion of Frank Street has several owner occupants. NHS has rehabilitated properties on this block a few years ago. The property is in poor condition and needs a full rehabilitation, it's currently in a state of decay. NHS will conduct a full environmental assessment and the final product will be energy efficient, as well as lead and hazard free. Evan noted the City is also selling the property at 31 Frank Street, having these two structures rehabilitated and occupied will enhance the street.

Alder Antunes asked if NHS keeps all the profit, does any of the money come back to the City? Evan told the committee that NHS keeps the proceeds of the sale, the City does not get any money back based on selling the property for \$1,000. The BoA guidelines give a discount to non-profits rehabilitating properties for deed restricted affordable housing, it acts as an additional subsidy and helps the non-profit.

Steve Fontana noted the parcel size section of the PAD Disposition Summary sheet seems to be wrong because the lot size says 25' by 110' and the total square footage is listed as 3,485, the math doesn't add up. Evan noted that staff utilize the assessor's data to prepare a file. The City sells property via quit claim deed and therefore the buyer is responsible for all due diligence. We don't get surveys of the land to arrive at the precise square footage, we use the assessor's data which has been our past practice.

Nate wanted to confirm the structure will be rehabilitated and not demolished. Evan confirmed the property will be rehabilitated. Alder Festa asked if the property is in fair enough condition to be safely rehabilitated? Evan told the committee that LCI does not believe the property needs to be demolished, the property needs a full renovation. NHS will have a lot of work to do. It doesn't seem fiscally responsible to demolish the house. Creating a homeowner with our non-profit partner is consistent with our goals and objectives.

A motion was made by Alder Antunes to approve the item, seconded by Steven Fontana, roll call was taken, approved unanimously

28-50 Thompson Street

Evan told the committee LCI proposes to sell two sliver parcels as a building lot to Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven, Inc (NHS) for \$2,000 to develop a two-family owner-occupied property with a 10-year minimum occupancy period. This property is in Alder Winter's Ward, he is supportive of the development and has sent a letter of support. The site can be developed when you combine the 2 parcels, the parcels combined have 44 feet of frontage and over 4000 square feet of lot area. Nate noted this parcel isn't a conforming and would require BZA approval. Nate noted the frontage hasn't changed under recent zoning changes as part of the ADU ordinance, the lot area has changed to 4000 square feet. There is also an issue staff recently observed in Non-Conformity section (Section 67) of the ordinance. Evan thought the regulations did change. Nate told the committee the regulations currently require 50 feet of frontage. Nate and Evan will follow up about any needed zoning relief. If any zoning relief is required the applicant will be required to obtain it prior to closing, this is an automatic safeguard, but this committee may add it to the approval if it so desires.

Alder Festa asked if we should approve this prior to BZA approval, or to wait? Would this hurt NHS? Evan noted this is our customary process and that we approve sales at PAD prior to going to BZA. Safeguards exist to ensure approval prior to closing. Nate also noted that the non-conformity provision of the Zoning ordinance may make development difficult. Evan noted developers currently go to the BZA for approvals on non-conforming parcels and this proposal is in keeping with past practice. Alder Festa asked if one needed to go to BZA if developing a single family? A single family could be developed as of right at this location.

A motion was made by Clay Williams to approve the item, seconded by Steve Fontana; roll call was taken, Approved with one abstention by Nate Hougrand

15-17 Winthrop Avenue

Evan told the committee LCI proposes to sell a building lot at 15-17 Winthrop Avenue to Neighborhood Housing Services of New Haven, Inc (NHS) for \$2,000 to develop a two-family owner-occupied property with 10-year minimum occupancy period. The site can be easily developed when you combine the 2 parcels, combined the site has 50 feet of frontage and sufficient lot area to support a two-family property. NHS has been working on this site for a few years. The neighbor wanted to purchase this land but LCI wanted to develop a structure and expand the tax base. The Alder is aware of the sale and staff will request a letter of support. Alder Festa asked about the impact to the neighbors. Evan said LCI has a responsibility to create affordable housing and to expand the tax base. Selling this land as a parking area isn't in the best interest of the City. Clay asked about a fence he sees in the 2019 google street view. Evan told the committee LCI fenced-off the lot and asked the people to remove their boat and personal property from the City-owned lot. NHS will likely survey the lot.

A motion was made Alder Antunes to approve the item, seconded by Steve Fontana, roll call was taken, approved unanimously.

PAD Guidelines / Discussion

Evan has submitted the proposed changes to the Development Administrator for final review. The Board of Alder has requested the Mayor send an Emergency Order to the Board of Alders when utilizing the PAD process as required by the Code of Ordinances. For years LCI had not submitted the Emergency Order. Our last submission to the Board of Alder via the PAD process contained the Emergency Order. Due to this, Corporation Counsel will be engaging the Board of Alders Leadership about possible further changes to the PAD Guidelines. Further conversations need to occur over the next few weeks.

More information will be shared in the future.

A motion to adjourn was made by Clay Williams, seconded by Steve Fontana, all were in favor.

Meeting Adjourned 3:50 P.M.