



Application for Boards and Commissions

City of New Haven, CT

Submitted On:

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Full Name	First Name: Emily Last Name: Sigman
Email	ecsigman@gmail.com
Are you a current New Haven resident?	Yes
Full Address	Street Address: 459 Dixwell Ave Apt 3 City: New Haven State: CT Zip: 06511
Phone Number	7203188855
Are you a registered voter in New Haven?	Yes
What political party do you belong to? [This information is only requested as it is required by the city charter (Article X Sec. 2-551) to ensure minority party representation on boards and commissions]	Currently registered democrat, plan to switch to independent
What is your current occupation?	Associate - Yale Environmental Leadership and Training Initiative
Please upload a resume or personal statement of interest	SigmanCV_Feb2023.pdf
New Haven Boards & Commissions Listed	Board of Park Commissioners
Please explain why you are interested in serving on this board/commission?	I have lived in New Haven for over a decade, and would like to give back to the city as a public servant. I am passionate about urban green spaces, have a strong background in community-based public landscaping, and want to join the Board of Parks Commissioners so that I can put my passion and expertise to good use. I believe that parks, outdoor recreation areas, and open spaces are critical components of healthy cities, and I want to help the city in advancing regulations that help our community thrive. New Haven is home to many wonderful parks and recreational spaces; Beaver Ponds park, the Farmington Canal Bike Path, Scantlebury Park, East Rock park, and our Newhallville greenspace and community garden (which we call Everybody Park) are some of my favorite places to spend time decompressing, enjoying fresh air, and getting exercise outdoors.

	<p>As a member of the Parks Commission, I would help support regulations that ensure these--and New Haven's many other outdoor spaces--remain protected, well-stewarded places for our community. At the same time, as a resident of Newhallville, I would be especially excited to help ameliorate the disparities in access to quality outdoor spaces that currently exist in our city, and ensure that everyone has easy access to great parks and outdoor recreational areas. Additionally, I have extensive experience with urban gardening, orchardry, food forests, foraging, mushroom cultivation, and maple syrup production. I am already involved with several community initiatives to advance these practices in New Haven, and would be excited to explore avenues for utilizing park space to serve the public through new uses like edible landscapes. Relatedly, as a scientist, I am also concerned about urban pollutants (such as heavy metals in soils, waterway contamination, etc) and if selected as a member of this board, I would be sure to carefully examine current and proposed activities--particularly those involving food production--to ensure that they do not pose health risks to anyone in our community, particularly children.</p>
<p>Why do you believe you are a good fit for this board/commission?</p>	<p>My educational and experiential background, combined with my longstanding dedication to community engagement, would help me to serve as an effective member of the Board of Parks Commissioners. I have a Master's degree in Forestry (Yale '21), and have worked as a practicing forester and on ecological monitoring crews. I am very familiar with the flora and fauna of New Haven, including non-native and invasive species, and have a good understanding of the ecological principles that govern how urban ecosystems respond to different human interventions and management practices. I also have a strong background in urban food production; from 2011-2016 I served as the co-founder and director of an urban farm and affordable housing cooperative, and simultaneously volunteered on the Boulder Edible Landscapes Working Group. While at Yale, I was the inaugural steward for the Yale Community Forest Garden, a public, community-based, interactive landscape comprised entirely of native edible and medicinal species. I also served as the co-leader of the Yale Ethnobotany and Mycology Society and the Coalition for Agriculture, Food and the Environment. I currently am a co-leader for an Urban Resources Initiative Greenspace/Gather New Haven community garden in Newhallville called Everybody Park. I have also worked in tandem with the Yale School Forests, the Urban Resources Initiative, and the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station to advance practices for making maple syrup out of urban Norway Maple Trees (considered a semi-invasive species). I regularly teach workshops on urban food and landscaping practices, including urban fruit production, vegetable farming, edible mushroom cultivation, maple syrup production, soil building, composting, and creating habitat for native wildlife and pollinators. I manage an extensive food forest, sugarbush, and native wildlife habitat landscape on my own property on Dixwell</p>

	<p>avenue, I enjoy sharing this space and my activities with my neighbors (especially the kids!) and would love to share more with the wider New Haven community. New Haven is my chosen home; I am putting down deep roots here and have a deep, personal interest in advancing policies that will help the city thrive both now and well into the future.</p>
<p>Do you have any time commitments that would prevent you from participating in the board/commission meetings?</p>	<p>I currently work full-time at the Yale School of the Environment, but have no outstanding commitments on Wednesday evenings that would conflict with the Parks Commission meetings. Additionally, I have a good amount of autonomy when it comes to my working schedule, and can usually accommodate occasional workday meetings and appointments if needed by the commission. I am actively involved in a few community projects--such as the Urban Greenspace Program--which usually meets on the weekends in the summertime, but I do not anticipate that these would conflict with commission meetings.</p>