



NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN DEPARTMENT

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April 30, 2021

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

RE: **PETITION TO AMEND THE NEW HAVEN ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT FOR ALLOWING ADUS AND A PLUS 1 DENSITY INCREASE IN RM1, RM2, RS1 and RS2 ZONES AND TO REDUCE MINIMUM LOT SIZE TO 4000 SF.**

Dear President Walker-Myers and Mr. Michael Smart;

The City Plan Department of the City of New Haven is pleased to present you and the honorable members of the Board of Alders with this Petition/Application to create a text amendment to the zoning ordinance. If approved, the text amendment will allow Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) within the envelope of existing structures in RM-1, RM-2, RS-1 and RS-2. This will encourage the creation of more affordable housing options in all neighborhoods, while preserving the fabric of our historic neighborhoods and building equity and income streams for owner occupants. The ADUs would not require additional parking, further enabling small scale housing production. The text change also proposes a reducing minimum lot size to a uniform 4000 sf across all residential zones. Minimum Lot sizes have historically been a structure of inequity in land use and allowing smaller buildable lots would reduce barriers to building new infill housing. This update is the first in a series of proposed text amendments to enable the production and preservation affordable housing.

The recommendation to allow ADUs in the New Haven Zoning Ordinance (NHZO) came from the work of the Affordable Housing Task Force (AHTF), recognizing the need for more housing options at all scales and in all neighborhoods. This recommendation is in alignment with the Board of Alders Legislative Agenda to encourage Safe, Affordable Housing and is a key initiative of Mayor Elicker's Housing for All Initiative.

"The Board of Alders, on the advice of the City Plan Commission and its Staff, should implement zoning changes to permit a wider range of affordable housing options including expanded permitting of rooming houses, allowance for accessory dwelling units, ease minimum lot area requirements; increase in density allowances and more."

AHTF

The zoning amendments proposed are complementary to the call for allowing for ADUs statewide in SB 1024, an affordable housing bill before the Connecticut General Assembly, championed by Desegregate CT. The recommendations for ADUS are also in alignment with Regional Plan Associations "[Be My Neighbor](#)" report and the AARP's [Future of Housing report](#). t

City Plan is proposing an incremental roll out of zoning amendments related to ADUs. The first iteration would restrict as-of-right ADUS within existing building envelopes. This could be converting a third floor into a new unit, fitting out a basement unit or converting an existing garage into a unit. Any alteration in bulk would still go before the Board of Zoning appeals. It would also restrict ADUs to owner occupants.

After this initial text amendment, based on success of the ordinance, further text amendments will come before you to gradually reduce restriction on ADUs, and to incorporate design and setback standards. The City will explore incentives and financing programs for targeting ADUs to deeply affordable tenants and to provide assistance to low income homeowners.

During this past year, the pandemic laid bare, the need for affordable housing and options for housing choices across the City. ADUs provide more opportunities for elderly homeowners to stay in their homes with an additional income stream, small household or single people to have more affordable choices. New Haven already has a long-standing tradition of ADUs in carriage houses and third floors across the city.

It is with great pleasure that I offer this zoning update for consideration, and our department looks forward to presenting this Application to you and the Board of Alders.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Aicha Woods". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Aicha Woods, Executive Director

CC: Albert Lucas, Director of Legislative Services