

Dear New Haven Alders Legislative Committee,

My name is Sinclair Williams and I live at 95 Division St. I moved to New Haven in 2013 and since then have watched nearly every parking lot downtown developed into apartment complexes that most people I know cannot afford to rent.

I am particularly concerned about developments currently being planned for Science Park, across the street from where I live. As you may know, the same developer that built Winchester Lofts is planning to develop the rest of Science Park. I fear that if we do not make a strong zoning policy, they will build four or five more Winchester Lofts that not only fail to provide affordable housing, but also lead to raising rents and displacement of people in my neighborhood. Therefore, I believe the Inclusionary Zoning policy should be changed in several ways before it is passed.

First, there should be a higher affordability requirement outside of the tier 1 core downtown area. HR&A, the consultants you hired to help craft the current policy, found that 58% of households need deeply affordable housing, and yet the current policy only provides for 5% affordability in Newhallville, Dixwell, Fairhaven and the Hill. I believe the requirement should be at least 20%, as it is in other cities across the country.

Second, I am concerned about the payment in lieu provisions in the draft ordinance. The current draft leaves me with many questions. What exactly is the Affordable Housing Trust Fund? Who determines how those funds will be used? What restrictions will be placed on those funds? I hope that these questions are answered before this ordinance comes to a vote.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sinclair Williams Esq. Attorney, New Haven Legal Assistance

95 Division St.