

December 7th 2018

Board of Alders

New Haven City Hall
Aldermanic offices
165 Church Street
New Haven CT 06510

Dear Alders,

This is a formal complaint about City officials reprehensible, irrational conduct, and the resulting financial losses to me, its citizens, and the City itself. This is my third similarly themed complaint. The first and second ones were sent on the eleventh and fifteenth of June 2018, and directed primarily to the Livable City Initiative's Executive Director (LCI) and the department of Economic development's Executive Director.

The unstructured procedure that governs New Haven property, and property development, is nearly impossible to navigate, or is being made so for the purposes of thwarting my efforts to develop or sell my property. I understand that bureaucratic circumstances can, and do occur, but New Haven officials have created a phantom procedure. Which is to say, it doesn't appear to exist.

For almost five years I've attempted to engage with the City to both sell, and to develop my property, only to be met with last minute cancellations, no action, radio silence, and fits-and-starts that have resulted in no progress at all.

After being removed several times at the last minute from the Community Development Committee's (CDC) agenda the CDC finally heard my, and LCI's, proposal to sell my property per the requirements of the associated Land Disposition Agreement (LDA). That hearing was in March of 2014. At the conclusion of that hearing the CDC succeeded in accomplishing absolutely nothing. As in, the CDC willfully took no action. On December 18th 2017 the CDC discharged from committee this same proposal without notification, or action.

More recently, after invitations from LCI to try and resolve the LDA matter so that I might be allowed to develop my property, the LCI's Executive Director Serena Neal-Sanjurjo, Economic Development's former Executive Director Mathew Nemerson, and ward 8's Alderman Aaron Greenberg, have engaged, and continue to engage, in attempts at proposals of selective enforcement masquerading as potential policy and precedent with the intent of financially penalizing me, while simultaneously protecting others in possession of equally problematic LDAs from the same financial penalty.

The public awareness of these issues is so well known that businesses interested in using the available space at my property are made uncomfortable by the City's conduct, and are now unwilling to make sound, productive, economic use of it. They, like me,

would like answers as to what's going on. Unfortunately, I'm no closer to giving them one than it would appear the City is to giving me one.

Equally as scandalous as the aforementioned handling of these matters, is that I'm subsidizing this inaction and incompetence, in that I'm paying property taxes, but have been blocked in my attempts to develop my property. I might add that my proposed mixed-use project has broad public and neighborhood support, and is in keeping with the recommendations of the Mill River district feasibility study, while also saving a historic building and protecting New Haven's structural heritage.

The above facts alone should be troubling to concerned City officials and Alders. If they aren't, perhaps knowing that the tax revenue losses to the City, due to this questionable head-in-the-sand style of governance is likely in the hundreds of thousands of dollars - and growing daily - since I initially approached the City some five years ago to deal with my LDA, and by interdependence, the buckets of problematic LDAs that pepper the City and its wards - some dating back to the 1970s.

Losing essential property tax revenue by ignoring a neighborhood supported project makes no economic, or social sense. Deliberately losing essential property tax revenue for years, while simultaneously thwarting a neighborhood supported project that would increase property tax revenue makes even less sense. Persisting in this strategy of willful ignorance during an extreme budget crises, is suspiciously irresponsible, penalizes all of New Haven's citizens and is just plain dumb.

Unfortunately,

Peter Chapman
433 Chapel St
New haven CT 06511