

PROJECT NARRATIVE

In 2006, the 500 Blake Street Café closed its doors after operating at the edge of Westville Village for more than thirty years. Since that time, 500 Blake has stood empty, and the large parking lot to the rear of the property (serving both 500 Blake and the nearby businesses on 881 and 883 Whalley) have been a gaping hole on the edge of the otherwise revitalizing Westville Village. 500 Blake Development LLC (the “Applicant”), an affiliated company of Ocean Management LLC, acquired the 500 Blake parcel and its attendant parking lot (the “Property”) last year. The Applicant respectfully submits this application for 1) an inland wetlands permit for regulated activities within 50 feet of an inland wetland and watercourse; 2) a special permit for a residential use in the BA-2 zone over 5,000 square feet; and 3) site plan approval for new construction containing 129 dwelling units, two commercial uses totaling 7,394 square feet of commercial space, and associated amenity space and parking. This new mixed-use development will activate one of the largest empty sites in all of Westville Village, building on the ongoing revitalization of the Village and furthering the efforts to make Westville a vibrant center of activity outside of Downtown.

Existing Conditions

The existing Property is a conglomeration of a number of parcels owned by two affiliated entities, the Applicant and 881 Whalley LLC, specifically:

<u>Street Address</u>	<u>MBLU</u>	<u>Approx. Acreage</u>	<u>Ownership</u>
500 Blake Street	388-1159-01700	0.33 Acres	500 Blake Dev. LLC
476 Blake Street	388-1159-00100	0.95 Acres	500 Blake Dev. LLC
20 Tour Avenue	388-1159-00400	0.1 Acres	500 Blake Dev. LLC
24 Tour Avenue	388-1159-00300	0.12 Acres	500 Blake Dev. LLC
Tour Avenue (unnumbered)	388-1159-00101	0.04 Acres	500 Blake Dev. LLC
881 Whalley Avenue	388-1159-01100	0.13 Acres	881 Whalley LLC
883 Whalley Avenue	388-1159-01200	1.24 Acres	881 Whalley LLC
TOTAL ACREAGE		2.91	

500 Blake Street is occupied by a former restaurant which has been vacant for almost 15 years. 881 and 883 Whalley are each occupied by existing commercial developments. The majority of the site is occupied by a large parking area serving the existing and former commercial uses on the Property. Primary vehicular access to the site is by virtue of curb cuts on Blake Street and Whalley Avenue, with a secondary access on Tour Avenue. The northeast boundary of the site is the centerline of the West River, which runs along a regulatory floodway. The West River is bounded by its associated inland wetlands and walls constructed and maintained as part of a United States Army Corps of Engineers flood control project. Notwithstanding the flood walls, a significant portion of the site lies within the flood zone; 1.31 acres of the site is mapped as subject to flooding, while 0.53 acres of the site is actually below the area’s 14.0 foot base flood elevation. Existing stormwater drainage for the parking lot, 500

Blake Street, and buildings along Whalley Avenue consists of catch basins connected directly to an outfall with flap valve discharging directly to the West River.¹

Proposed Conditions

A total of 129 dwelling units and over 7300 square feet of new commercial space will be built on the rear portion of the Property, along (but set back from) the flood wall bounding the West River. First-floor uses will be limited to areas fronting on Blake Street and Tour Avenue. Along Blake Street, it is intended that the new construction will feature an approximately 3,900-square-foot restaurant² and, closer to the river, an approximately 3,400-square-foot retail space expected to house a small market.³ This market would include an outdoor seating area next to the existing boardwalk, allowing customers to enjoy the adjacent flowing river and adding to the vitality of the Blake Street frontage. Along the Tour Avenue frontage, and in recognition of the much smaller-scale neighborhood between Tour and West Rock Avenue, such intensive commercial activities are not proposed. Instead, six of the dwelling units will be designed as guest suites,⁴ primarily for temporary use by guests of building tenants such as friends, relatives, and other visitors. This quieter use of the first floor along Tour Avenue will complement the more laid-back neighborhood of the Tour-West Rock block compared to the busier Whalley Avenue and Blake Street frontages.

The new development's overall layout has also been driven by the large expanse of the site which is within the West River's flood zone. The new building has been specifically designed and laid out to avoid interference with the existing public easement that allows for maintenance of the flood wall along the West River. Furthermore, the existing chain-link fence along the existing boardwalk running along the top of the flood wall will be removed, making the boardwalk a much more welcoming feature for the general public to stroll along the riverfront. The large parking lot is being only minimally regraded in order to maintain the existing site's flood storage capacity, and has been redesigned to provide for sufficient parking for both the new commercial and residential uses and the existing commercial uses fronting Whalley Avenue, leading to no new parking demand.

Primary access to the site will be revised by demolishing the former 500 Blake Street Café, allowing new access to be constructed at the existing Blake-Valley intersection. This will allow the majority of the site's traffic to exit at an existing intersection with stoplight controls, minimizing the potential traffic impact on Blake Street. The existing access on Whalley Avenue will be revised to accommodate two-way traffic only to the existing parking lot on the adjacent

¹ The Applicant is not currently aware of any treatment, infiltration, filtering, or other stormwater management best practices performed by the existing drainage system, and the current drainage system is believed to be untreated stormwater discharging directly to the River.

² Allowable by right, NHZO § 42T Section E Row 4, although depending on the needs of the specific tenant a special exception for liquor service may be required per NHZO § 42T Section E Row 5. Such a special exception is not a part of this current application.

³ Allowable by right, NHZO § 42T Section C Row 6.

⁴ These guest suites, over 100 square feet smaller than the average studio apartment proposed elsewhere in the development and containing only a small kitchenette/dining area and sleeping area/workspace, are technically treated as dwelling units under the ordinance, NHZO § 2, and are permissible by right along the Tour Avenue Frontage per NHZO § 42T Section A Row 2, note 1.

property at 893 Whalley, with the driveway narrowing to one-way-in to the central parking lot behind 881-883 Whalley. This is intended to funnel all parking and loading traffic for the 881-883 Whalley uses to the central parking lot and the site exit to Blake Street, minimizing the amount of traffic exiting onto a busy section of Whalley Avenue. Secondary access will be at Tour Avenue, allowing for additional emergency access while minimizing the amount of traffic sent down the narrow one-way streets of the Tour-West Rock block. The vehicle parking spaces will be supplemented by a significant excess of bicycle spaces—more than four times the required bicycle parking—with two rooms of the building containing a total of fifty (50) indoor bicycle spaces and exterior bike racks contributing an additional ten (10) outdoor bike spaces.

The site's stormwater system will be significantly upgraded, installing infiltration and treatment measures well outside the uplands of the West River. Infiltrated water will discharge to groundwater, and the retention system has been conservatively sized to result in reduced peak flow even if no water whatsoever is infiltrated to groundwater. Furthermore, hydrodynamic separators will be installed at all of the site's catch basins to treat all stormwater draining from the site's parking lot to the site's catch basins. Compared to the site's current system, which discharges untreated parking lot runoff directly to the river, this will greatly reduce the site's impacts to the West River. Rather than dumping untreated stormwater directly into the river, the site will instead hold more of its water on-site, and discharge only clean, treated water to the river.

Wetlands Criteria

The Applicant proposes certain activities within 50 feet of the West River and its wetlands, and therefore those activities are regulated by the New Haven Inland Wetlands Regulations. Specifically, the Applicant will be grading, filling, and performing construction within the 50-foot upland review area. However, these activities will not have any substantial adverse impact on the West River or its wetlands, and therefore an inland wetlands permit should be issued. The activities are separated from the wetlands by an existing flood wall, which itself acts as a barrier protecting the wetlands from the activities on the site. Erosion and sedimentation controls conforming to state standards are proposed elsewhere on the site to provide similar protections.

Furthermore, none of these activities are proposed within the wetlands. No deposition of any material is proposed within the wetlands. No dredging is proposed. No changes to the natural channel of the West River are proposed.⁵ No substantial diminutions in the flow of the river are proposed. No change to the river's flood storage capacity is proposed, and grading of the site parking lot has been specifically designed to maintain the site's existing flood storage capacity. The stormwater system has been designed so that in the case of overflow, the system will discharge into the West River. However, the stormwater upgrades include the installation of three hydrodynamic separators to remove sediment and hydrocarbons that are currently being carried by the drainage system directly to the West River. Infiltration chambers will also be installed to reduce the volume and peak flow rate of stormwater discharging to the West River. These upgrades will result in substantially cleaner discharge to the river and substantially greater

⁵ In this case, as the West River was rerouted as part of a large-scale project in the early 20th century, "natural channel" is used to describe the channel of the West River as defined by its current course within the regulatory floodway.

recharge of groundwater through infiltration. As a result, the proposed development will not cause any substantial adverse impacts to the West River or its wetlands, and will instead result in substantial improvements to the site's impact on those wetlands.

Special Permit Criteria

The proposed development is also compliant with all of the special permit criteria of NHZO § 64(e)(2) in that the proposed residential use is in accord with the public convenience and welfare as follows:

1. The proposed residential use complies with all applicable regulations of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance as shown on the plans and supporting materials.
2. The proposed residential use is in full compliance with the City's development plans, including but not limited to the facts that:
 - a. The City's Comprehensive Plan of Development, Vision 2025, called for "dense, mixed-use developments with reduced parking requirements" in Westville Village and encouraged the development of a small grocery store in the area.⁶ 500 Blake Street was specifically identified as an opportunity for such a development, and this development is precisely the sort of development envisioned by the comprehensive plan.
 - b. CPC 1542-06, by which the Commission recommended approval of the proposed creation of the BA-2 Zone for this area in 2018, specifically recognized that the new zone increased density and reduced parking in order to "allow for more economic activity within the district" that would allow for "both a wider variety of retail, restaurant and service uses as well as for more choices within each use category."⁷ The proposed development includes new residential and commercial uses at the higher residential density envisioned by the new zone.
 - c. CPC 1542-06 also recognized that "[i]ncreased activity in the district may also lead to the development of public transportation opportunities that do not currently exist, or at least to the enhancement of those that do."⁸ The site is in immediate proximity to several current major bus routes, including CT*transit* routes 243, 241, and 246. Furthermore, the site is in immediate proximity to the intersection of Whalley Avenue and Blake Street, which the 2019 Move New Haven Transit Mobility Study recognized was ripe for a potential mini-hub at one end of a potential new bus rapid transit line.⁹ Creating an additional 126 full-time residential units, with guest accommodations, and destinations such as a local grocery market, in addition to the growing residential and arts scene in Westville Village, will create additional demand for transit service, providing further support for the existing bus lines and a potential future bus rapid transit system, in furtherance of the City's current and ongoing transit planning.

⁶ Comprehensive Plan, IV-30.

⁷ CPC 1542-06, pg. 3.

⁸ *Id.*

⁹ Move New Haven Final Report, pg. 19. This study also recognized that CT*transit* Route 243 was one of the four most effective routes in the system collectively attracting 46% of the bus system's weekly ridership. Move New Haven Final Report, pg. 12.

3. The proposed residential use will not have an adverse impact on public access to significant scenic vistas or to significant wildlife or vegetation habitat. Street-level views of West Rock will continue to be available from Blake Street and the new outdoor eating area. Furthermore, the existing chain-link fence along the existing boardwalk will be removed, making the boardwalk a more welcoming area for the public to stroll and enjoy the views of West Rock and the West River.
4. The proposed residential use is residential, and will not feature any detrimental vibrations, fumes, odor, dust, noise, glare, hazardous materials, or other use that would have an adverse impact on nearby properties. Furthermore, the use will not have an adverse flood impact on any nearby properties, as the grading of the site has been designed to maintain flood storage capacity and no work whatsoever is proposed within the regulatory floodway.
5. No features of historic significance will be adversely affected by the proposed residential use. While the site is located within the Westville Village National Register Historic District, and includes two contributing buildings of that District at 881 and 883 Whalley, those two buildings are proposed to remain and no changes to them are proposed. The building at 500 Blake Street is a noncontributing building to the Westville Village National Register Historic District¹⁰ and its demolition will therefore not have any adverse impact on the National Register Historic District or any contributing building therein.
6. The operational and physical characteristics of the proposed residential use will be compatible with the surrounding area and the neighborhood in which it is proposed, in that:
 - a. Landscaping upgrades and buffering between nearby uses in accordance with the New Haven Zoning Ordinance will be installed;
 - b. Site drainage will be improved by installing treatment measures to improve the quality of runoff and infiltration measures will be installed to reduce the total amount and rate of runoff;
 - c. Site access and circulation will be improved by minimizing traffic turning from the site onto Whalley Avenue and re-aligning the Blake Street entrance with the existing Blake-Valley intersection;
 - d. The proposed residential use's bulk, scale, and orientation are within applicable zoning height limits and its four-story height allows for a smooth transition in height between the two- and three-story developments fronting Whalley Avenue and the five-story Wintergreen at Westville development across the West River. This is complemented by orienting the bulk of the building away from the smaller-scale development along Whalley Avenue, closer to the larger-scale development across the river. The new site access on Blake Street further separates and distinguishes the larger, newer construction from the existing buildings on Whalley Avenue.
 - e. The character of the proposed residential use, its exterior materials, and exterior elements are compatible with the surrounding area. The fabric of Westville Village is a collection of buildings heterogeneous in material, age, overall scale, height and width of facades, and materials, and uses. As the National Register

¹⁰ NRHD Nomination Form, page 8.

listing for the Westville Village Historic District recognized, the District includes a variety of numerous architectural styles spread over 100 years of development, including Early Republic/Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate, and Classical Revival styles. What holds the village together, lending it a generally cohesive character, is the overall simplicity of the building forms and its density—buildings are tight to the street with no or minimal side yards. Materials typically are brick or clapboard storefronts with areas of glass, metal, and simple forms. The proposed residential use is consistent with this fabric. Building masses follow the lot lines and path of West River. Street edges are reinforced, with retail space on Blake Street marked with extensive glass. The overall mass of the proposed use is broken into three parts, one brick, one clapboard, and one metal-clad, evocative also of the scale of the existing former mill and factory buildings that are an intrinsic part of the Westville Village fabric behind the commercial precinct of Whalley Avenue. The residential nature of the proposed building is expressed in the fenestration and is enlivened by shallow metal Juliet balconies, which engage with the views of the natural environment of the neighborhood—the West River, West Rock Ridge State Park, and West Rock itself – as a further element of connection.

7. The proposed residential use will not adversely affect the safety and convenience of vehicular and pedestrian circulation on, adjacent to, or near the site. The site's main Blake Street access will be relocated to align with the existing Blake-Valley intersection, minimizing potential traffic conflicts on Blake Street, while also minimizing the amount of traffic exiting the site onto Whalley Avenue. Sufficient parking is provided both for the new uses and the existing commercial uses at 881-883 Whalley Avenue, ensuring that the site's parking demand will not overwhelm existing parking facilities. And the site's close proximity to several current major transit routes, potential future transit hubs, and existing public parking at the Park New Haven lot at the Whalley-Blake intersection, combined with the existing walkability of Westville Village, will provide numerous alternative options for tenants, guests, workers, and commercial customers to the site.

For the reasons set forth above, and as otherwise set forth in the application materials and plans, the Applicant respectfully requests that the New Haven City Plan Commission issue an inland wetlands permit for the proposed regulated activities, approve a special permit for the proposed residential use over 5,000 square feet, and approve the included site plan for the proposed development.



Housing & Neighborhood Planning



Existing view of Westville Village in Westville neighborhood.

and to ensure the continuous monitoring and implementation of various environmental plans, as proposed.

Land use changes are recommended along Whalley Avenue, near **Westville Village**, to promote dense, mixed-use developments with reduced parking requirements. Service-related commercial uses such as child care, banking facilities, etc., should be encouraged within the Westville Village business district. The Commission also encourages the development of a small format grocery store in this area. Opportunities for dense, mixed-use re-development exist at 500 Blake Street and 781 Blake Street.

Westville has a significant concentration of empty nesters and senior households (Databook findings). Transit-oriented, senior housing development is therefore encouraged along with support services for aging in place within this neighborhood for residents who plan on downsizing, yet are left with fewer options currently.

A proposed Cross Town West bus route will help provide direct CTTRANSIT access to Hamden and West Haven from the west side of the city and improve access to the SCSU campus, as well as the City educational campus on Ella Grasso Boulevard. Traffic calming measures are needed on Whalley Avenue, Valley Street, Fitch Street, Fountain Street, and Blake Street. Pedestrian crossings should be improved at intersecting streets on Ella Grasso Boulevard to ensure pedestrian safety between the West River Memorial Park and the surrounding neighborhoods. Connect the missing links in existing bicycle/pedestrian network at Fitch Street, Fountain Street, and on Edgewood Avenue. A **dedicated bike path** is envisioned along Edgewood Avenue connecting the west side of the city to the Downtown.



A dedicated bike lane is envisioned along Edgewood Avenue connecting the west side of the city to the Downtown.

Reviving Edgewood’s Coogan Pavilion as a community center and programming the hours of operation and activities for existing public swimming pools located in schools nearby (Hillhouse and Career High Schools) would help in promoting indoor recreational options for residents and further enhances community interaction.

Enhanced partnerships with Yale University and SCSU for use of their ample athletic fields and facilities are suggested.

West River

Within the West River neighborhood, West River watershed management; the implementation of West River Greenway Corridor Trail; redevelopment of vacant parcels on Route 34;

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AND MAP AMENDMENT.** Petition for Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment establishing a village center mixed used zoning district (BA-2) and zoning map amendment to change the zoning designation of properties in Westville Village from General Business (BA) to Village Center Mixed Use (BA-2). (City Plan)

REPORT: **1542-06**

ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

Over the last several months, the Westville Village Renaissance Alliance, working in association with Yale Community & Economic Development Clinic and concerned citizens of Westville, and with assistance from New Haven City Plan Department staff, have worked to develop land use regulations intended to redefine and revitalize the Westville Village area. The proposed text and map amendments to the New Haven Zoning Ordinance that make up this proposal are primarily intended to not only preserve the existing village-type character of the area but also provide opportunities for future development that will ensure the future health and vitality of not only the proposed district but also that of the surrounding residential neighborhood.

The proposed map change for Westville Village involves a change from its existing General Business (BA) District designation to that of the village-specific designation of Village Center Mixed Use (BA-2) District. This proposal is based largely upon the idea that this area is not effectively regulated as a BA District given its unique historic pattern of village development. Furthermore, while closely modeled on the existing Neighborhood Center Mixed Use (BA-1) District currently in effect along much of Grand Avenue (and the city's first step in recognizing that certain General Business Districts are of such unique character that they require a different level of regulation), proposed text amendments reflect the fact that Westville Village significantly differs from Grand Avenue, mostly in terms of its physical form. The BA-1 District is very linear in character; Westville Village on the other hand, is a highly compact, pre-automotive village development.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The existing Westville Village BA District extends southeast to northwest along Whalley Avenue from Jewell Street to approximately half the distance between Blake and Harrison Streets. It extends back an approximate average of 500ft to the northeast of Whalley Avenue from Jewell Street to northwest of Blake Street; on the south-eastern side of Whalley the BA District extends back from Whalley Avenue an average of less than 200ft between West Rock Avenue and Phillip Street. It encompasses approximately 63 properties on a total of 27.5 acres of which all but less than 2 acres fall within the Coastal Area Management District.

The existing area is characterized by a relatively diverse yet compatible mixed use street façade, most prominently on Whalley Avenue but also onto Blake Street. This type of diversity, given the actual history of the district, appears to lend itself to the degree of authenticity that is an essential element of character in any village that has a close connection to early industrial activities, particularly those related directly to the river. The Whalley Avenue and Blake Street building lines are consistently situated at or in immediate adjacency to the street line with the exception of four automotive use related businesses located at the southeast end of the district. There are considerable variations in respect to mass and construction material in the district (largely due to the presence of a number of structures previously devoted to industrial use; building height however is consistently measured between one and three stories.

In terms of current uses in the district, it is clear that it is mixed in a manner more typically associated with a village form of development as opposed to a more linear type of neighborhood mixed use area. There is a significant residential presence in the center of the district on Tour Avenue and West Rock Avenue. There are any number of small to medium sized retail, office, service, and restaurant establishments located on the ground floor of existing structures. There is a significant arts-based presence in the district. Upper floor occupancy appears to be primarily but not completely devoted to residential use.

The village contains a multitude and variety of freestanding commercial uses of all types, both neighborhood related and otherwise. There are also a number of structures devoted strictly to residential use, of both single and multi-family nature, located primarily in the virtual heart of the village. For all the life and vitality that these uses bring to the village however, none truly define the character of the area as does the small to medium size two to three story mixed use structure. Typically incorporating first floor commercial uses with residences above they represent a building and use form that is not only historically resonant but which has gained contemporary credibility as an efficient and sustainable form of neighborhood development. The levels of density and the diversity of commercial (both neighborhood and regionally oriented) and residential uses characteristic of this type of land use arrangement are clearly the basis for what is currently working best in Westville Village. The map and text amendments, for the most part, propose to make contemporary use of these traditional land use concepts that have served the area well for over a century.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

MAP

The proposed boundaries of the BA-2 district are identical to the existing Westville Village BA District limits. The district is composed of approximately 63 properties on over 27 acres located along Whalley Avenue for a distance of about 2000ft from Fitch Street to north of Blake Street. Although consideration was given to extending the district north along both Blake Street and Fitch Street it was determined that the focus of the initial proposal should be on maximizing activity within the existing village area before allowing for any expansion of the district.

TEXT

As mentioned earlier in this report, the new text language distinguishes between not only the existing General Business (BA) District and a Village District (BA-2) but also between Neighborhood Center (BA-1) and Village District in terms of both use and form. In respect to use, over 60 of the proposed permitted uses for this new district are currently permitted in the same form in both BA and BA-1 districts. A number of uses permitted by right in a General Business district will, again as in the BA-1 District, continue to be permitted in the Village District but are subject to a higher standard of review. These Special Permit/Exception uses include commercial schools, package stores, hospitals, smaller commercial parking lots as well as any use of over 5,000 square feet in area. On the other hand, there are close to two dozen uses that, as in the BA-1 District, will no longer be permitted in Westville Village. These include rooming and boarding houses, motor vehicle related uses, gun repair, drive through eating establishments, outdoor recreation establishments, large parking lots, poster signs and commercial kennels. In addition, there are two uses, barber shops and dance schools, currently permitted by right in the BA District but which require a Special Exception in the BA-1 District. They will remain as permitted by right uses in the BA-2 District.

The proposed BA-2 District will also involve the introduction or prohibition of certain uses currently either permitted or prohibited in both BA and BA-1 Districts, along with a new regulatory approach to residential use. Examples of newly permitted uses would include small research testing laboratories and other high technology uses, commercial bakeries, live work loft units in new structures and cat cafes. Prohibited uses include vending machine operators, check cashing establishments, pawn shops, funeral homes, poultry markets and convenience stores. Regulation of residential uses will be somewhat unique to the new district in that first floor residential development along Whalley Avenue will require a Special Permit; in all other portions of the district first floor residential use will be permitted by right.

The physical form of the district is regulated in a number of ways similar to the BA-1 District. Physical development is restricted by height (50ft maximum as opposed to 45ft in the BA-1) rather than floor to area ratio as in other nonresidential areas of the city. There is also a minimum building height of 25ft. This minimum/maximum approach is reinforced in language that seeks to maintain the traditional form of the area by requiring new buildings to be at least two but no more than four stories in height. Additionally, the Village District incorporates BA-1 language minimizing bulk and area requirements as well as doorway/entrance

requirements, first floor window and security gate standards and provisions related to landscaping, fencing and screening.

Finally, there are on-site site parking requirements. Once again largely reflective of existing BA-1 language and working from the principal that creation of a district that increases the potential for multiple uses (work, shop, live, eat) by an individual reduces the overall need for off-street parking in the district, parking requirements, especially for small commercial uses, have been reduced significantly. Also, a maximum parking allowance would reduce the potential for empty parking lots and a provision for shared parking in mixed use buildings should facilitate efficient use of parking resources. Of particular note are two items not reflective of current BA-1 standards. The onsite parking requirement has been reduced from one space per residential dwelling to ½ space per dwelling unit. Also, where the BA-1 regulations require that any parking used to meet an on-site requirement must be located no more than 300ft from the subject property, this proposal would allow for a maximum distance of 650ft.

As a whole, the proposed text and map amendments should contribute directly to meeting the needs of the Westville Village District as well as the greater Westville area.

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held on March 29, 2018. Transcripts of the hearing are available at the City Plan Department.

FINDINGS

In terms of the New Haven Vision 2025 and the impact of this proposal upon the city as a whole, there are a number of references to the type and form of use that is proposed. In the Proposed Land Use section of the Plan Summary portion of the plan neighborhood mixed-use is described as “desirable for pedestrians and functional for neighborhood services, storefront retail and office activity.” Also, in the Neighborhood Commercial District portion of the Economic Development chapter of the plan, smaller commercial districts are described as “an integral component to the quality of life in New Haven.” Of particular relevance to this application is the reference in that same section to the idea that “the success of neighborhood business district depends on the mix of uses, properly operated, in order to generate sufficient customer traffic.” The intent of this proposal is clearly in accordance with all three of these ideas. Of additional significance for the Commission is its increasing awareness that a set of core regulatory concepts can be easily extended (with the appropriate level of differentiation that each would require) to other neighborhood commercial areas of the City and used to improve their functional relationships with not only their surrounding residential areas but also with each other.

A second level of analysis is concerned with the relationship of the subject properties to the surrounding residential neighborhood. By providing for increased levels of building density and reduced levels of parking, the proposed amendments will allow for more economic activity within the district. This should, in turn, provide the surrounding residential areas with access to both a wider variety of retail, restaurant and service uses as well as for more choices within each use category. Increased activity in the district may also lead to the development of public transportation opportunities that do not currently exist, or at least to the enhancement of those that currently do. Finally, increased economic activity in the district should lead to more employment opportunities in the district which would be within walking distance of the adjacent residential areas.

The most basic set of concerns regarding this proposed change has to do with the nature of the properties themselves. In this particular case, it can be stated that each of the properties in the proposed district are of sufficient size and shape so as to be utilized for many if not all BA-2 uses. What is most important to recognize, however is that the proposed regulations, with their emphasis upon both intensification and diversification of uses, are intended to codify the very processes that have kept this area economically viable for well over a century.

SECTION 64(d)(2)c OF THE NEW HAVEN ZONING ORDINANCE

Section 64(d)(2) requires that the City Plan Commission take into consideration in evaluating any amendment to the Zoning Ordinance Text and/or Zoning Map:

a. Errors in the existing ordinance, changes that have taken place in the city and in patterns of construction and land use, the supply of land and its peculiar suitability for various purposes, the effect of a map change on the surrounding area, the purposes of zoning and the comprehensive plan of the City of New Haven;

As indicated, these proposed changes are clearly appropriate in view of changes that have taken place in Westville Village

b. Whether some other method or procedure under the zoning ordinance is more appropriate; and

As above, examination of recent land-use history in this area clearly indicates the appropriateness of the present course of action.

c. In the case of a map change, the size of the area involved. As a general policy, the City Plan Commission shall not consider favorably any petition which would result in a total contiguous area (separated only by streets, and excluding the area of streets) of less than two acres in the case of a residence district, less than one acre in the case of a Business District, or less than four acres in the case of an Industrial District.

The proposed Change will result in a 27 acre BA-2 District.

SECTIONS(S) 181 and 182 OF THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF NEW HAVEN

The City Plan Commission finds that, based on submitted information the proposed map and text amendments comply with Sections 181 and 182 of the Charter of the City of New Haven in that they are (i) uniform for each class of buildings or structures, (ii) made in accordance with the comprehensive plan, (iii) designed to lessen congestion in the streets, secure safety from fire, panic and other dangers, promote health and the general welfare, provide adequate light and air, prevent the overcrowding of land, avoid undue concentration of population, facilitate the adequate provisions for transportation, water, sewerage, parks and other public requirements, and (iv) made with reasonable consideration as to the character of the proposed BA-2 District and its peculiar suitability for particular uses and with a view to conserving the value of buildings and encouraging the most appropriate use of land throughout the City

ADVICE

The Commission finds that the proposed zoning map and text amendments are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of Development and are appropriate given the character of both the surrounding neighborhood and the subject properties themselves; and a need to ensure the continued viability of the existing neighborhood business district. The Commission further finds the proposed amendments serve a substantial government interest, are in the public interest and promote the health, safety and general welfare of the community without unreasonable limits on land use and that the proposed map and text amendments are in full compliance with the standards and requirements of Section(s) 181 and 182 of the Charter of the City of New Haven and Section 62(d)(2) of the New Haven Zoning Ordinance and should be approved.

ADOPTED: March 28, 2018
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: MPL
Michael Piscitelli, AICP
Deputy Economic Development Administrator



BRT Overlay Mini-Hubs

As part of the BRT overlay, the establishment of mini-hubs would provide additional connections between bus routes to provide opportunities for transfers between bus routes at locations outside of the New Haven Green (thereby, reducing the dependence upon a single hub in Downtown New Haven). Each of the following four proposed mini-hubs (two at each end of the BRT overlay routes) would feature shelters, seating and real-time passenger information. For locations where multiple buses (local and BRT buses) would arrive together, changes to existing bus stop lengths were identified entailing either extending the length of the bus stop or by creating a second, new stop adjacent to the first bus stop. In some cases, a limited number of curbside parking spaces may need to be taken.

- **Dixwell Avenue and Putnam Avenue Mini-Hub**
Transfers could be made to the BRT route, *CTtransit* Routes 238 Dixwell Avenue at this location, and to Routes 234 Winchester Avenue and 237 Shelton Avenue at the Putnam Place Mall (300 feet east).
- **Grand Avenue and Ferry Street Mini-Hub**
Transfers to the BRT route, *CTtransit* Routes 212 Grand Avenue and 215 New Haven/Wallingford/Meriden could be available at this location.
- **Whalley Avenue and Blake Street**
Transfers to the BRT route and *CTtransit* Route 243 Whalley Avenue could be available at this location. In addition, transfers to *CTtransit* Route 241 Goffe Street could be made at the Blake Street/Valley Street bus stop, located 300 feet east of the mini-hub, and to *CTtransit* Route 246 Edgewood Avenue at the Alden Avenue/Fountain Street stop located 800 feet south of the mini-hub.
- **Campbell Avenue and Main Street in West Haven**
Transfers could be made at this location to the BRT route, *CTtransit* Route 265 Congress Avenue and Route 271 Kimberly Avenue.



within a ½ mile of existing bus service within Greater New Haven. Every \$1 invested in public transportation generates \$4 in economic returns.²

Overall, the Greater New Haven region’s bus system needs to be modernized so the region can stay economically vibrant and competitive with peer cities that have already embraced modern transit features.

3.1 Bus Performance Evaluation

The Study conducted a bus performance evaluation to identify areas where the system could be enhanced. Through the identification and application of a wide range of metrics, each bus route was assessed for performance. While the evaluation highlighted issues that should be addressed on most routes it also identified four bus routes as the most effective in the system: **CTtransit Routes 212 (Grand Avenue) and 238 (Dixwell Avenue), 243 (Whalley Avenue) and 265 (Congress Avenue)**. These four routes attract 46% of the system’s weekday ridership, with the remaining ridership (54%) distributed across the remaining 11 bus routes.

These routes were rated the best in the system for all performance metrics (including costs per rider) except for two metrics (bus stop spacing and peak/off-peak loading). For bus stop spacing these routes exceed the metric of 4 bus stops per mile, with some route segments exceeding nine stops per mile. Numerous closely-spaced bus stops on high ridership routes result in longer bus travel times and only nominally expand accessibility. Additionally, these routes have periods during the day where passenger crowding is an issue, with as many as 1.71 riders per seat in the peak and 1.11 riders per seat in the off-peak.³ This exceeds the recommended number of 1.0 passengers per bus seat during off-peak times and 1.3 passengers per bus seat during peak times.⁴

This evaluation suggested there is crowding on these routes, which leads to long dwell times at stops, customer discomfort and dissatisfaction. Crowding indicates a need to examine bus scheduling, fleet assignment, and to consider new types of service such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

² American Public Transportation Association (APTA) *Public Transportation Facts, 2019*.

³ 2017 Phase 1: *Existing Conditions and Evaluation of the Greater New Haven Bus System, Page 54*.

⁴ The *Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual* (TCRP Report 100) recommends specific load factors for overall passenger comfort. To efficiently allocate service and maintain passenger comfort, the TCQSM recommends scheduling service to meet 1.0 passengers per seat during off-peak times and 1.3 passengers per seat during peak times.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

**Westville Village Historic District, New Haven
New Haven County, CT**

Section 7 Page 6

Inventory of Contributing and Non-Contributing Resources

Dates of construction taken from the Historic Resources Inventory are so annotated with the initials HRI. Dates followed by a "v" were determined by visual field observation. All other dates of construction were determined by land record research.

Inv. #	Address	C/NC	DATE	NAME/DESCRIPTION
BLAKE STREET				
1.	446	C	1906-1948 HRI	Greist Manufacturing Company. Brick masonry, 2-story, Colonial Revival industrial building with flat roof, segmental and semicircular window headers, and door openings, and a projecting cornice with modillions. Colonial Revival style influence in the door surrounds. Main office structure was built in 1906 with additions in 1909 and other wings added to the east elevations during the World War II era. Photograph #12.
2.	495	C	1906-1912 HRI	Geometric Tool Company. Two-story Colonial Revival-influenced masonry industrial structure. Façade of the main block incorporates a denticulated cornice and segmental window headers. Entry porch is a late 20 th c. addition. Windows on east and west elevations of the main block have cut-stone sills. Photograph #11.
3.	500	NC	c. 1885v	2-story frame (vinyl) commercial structure with flat roof. Not enough of original building is discernable.
4.	508	NC	1962	2-story, concrete block with masonry veneer on façade) flat-roofed commercial block.
5.	512	C	c. 1840 HRI	2 1/2-story, 3-bay, frame, Greek Revival house with full façade gable pediment. Corner pilasters are embellished with an anthemion pattern. Fluted columns on entry porch support a full entablature with projecting cornice embellished by dentils. Photograph #13.