



Justin Elicker
Mayor

New Haven Development Commission

165 Church Street, New Haven, Connecticut
06510
Phone: (203) 946-2366 Fax: (203) 946-2391



Michael Piscitelli
Economic
Development
Administrator

Minutes
Regular Meeting
Wednesday, January 8, 2025
In-Person/Online Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Manmita Dutta
Dan McLeggon
Casey Pickett
Dirk Bergemann (new Commissioner)
Charles Negaro (new Commissioner)
Caroline Tanbee Smith, Aldermanic Representative

City Staff Present:

Carlos Eyzaguirre, Deputy Economic Development Administrator
Mark Wilson, Manager, Neighborhood Commercial Development
Malachi Bridges, Economic Development Officer
Ginny Kozlowski, CEO of Economic Development

Call to Order: Mr. Eyzaguirre opened the meeting at 8:44 am

1. Review of Previous Minutes:

Minutes from November 2024 were approved unanimously.

2. Introduction of New Commissioners:

Two new members of the Commission were in attendance. Charles Negaro, owner/founder of Chabaso Bakery as well as Atticus Café was introduced as a new Commissioner recently appointed by Mayor Elicker and approved by the Board of Alders. -

Similarly, Dirk Bregemann, professor of Economics and Computer Science at Yale was also introduced. Both Commissioners provided brief introductions of themselves and expressed their eagerness to serve the City of New Haven and lend their expertise where applicable.



InfoNewHaven.com

203. 946.2366 Phone / 203. 946.2391 Fax

3. **Approval of 2025 Meeting Schedule:**

Standing meeting dates for 2025, (second Wednesday of each month – 8:30 a.m.) need to be formally approved by the Commission, sent over to the Board of Alders and ultimately posted at the City Town Clerk’s office for public viewing

(October 8th needs to be moved due to potential conflict with religious holiday/

Proposed dates: Approved unanimously

4. **Officer Slate Discussion:**

Need to elect officers for this Commission: Chair, vice-chair and secretary are needed. Carlos will send an email nominating slate to gauge who is interested. The nominating slate can then be approved at a future meeting.

5. **“Imagine Next” Mill River Revitalization Meeting #2**

Second Mill River: Imagine Next community meeting held in early December – much better turnout than first meeting in May; \$5M in Urban Act funding to deploy for mixed-use development in the district. Funding can be used for property acquisition and Mill River Trail improvements as well as property remediation.

Mr Bridges described some of the community feedback to the Commission including:

- Desire for streetscape improvements and elements that connect residents to the waterfront. (City asked the community what exactly they would like to see; using green dots on maps). Also heard requests for improved lighting and wider sidewalks.
- Branding for Mill River - what do we see the as the branding for Mill River and how do we re-imagine this space into a mixed-use community?
- Waterfront is underutilized-for both responsible development as well as recreation/exploration and more entertainment activity)

Alder Smith suggested more ways to gather community feedback including placing QR Codes in key places around the Mill River District to ensure continued community input as the Project moves forward.

Maintaining Mill River’s “industrial heritage” was discussed. There was a general community desire to keep the industrial feel of the District (architecturally, etc.) so that the new housing and recreational uses mesh well with the existing industrial uses and history.

It was suggested that Yale could expand its shuttle service to this part of town.

City staff noted that Sandeep Aysola, the City’s Traffic Director, is working with Yale on potential expansion of shuttle routes and perhaps with increased housing density in Mill River the shuttle could some day run there.

Commissioners asked City staff to describe how far along the Mill River project is and how the Commission can be supportive in seeing it to fruition. City staff noted that they are working both internally and with third party planners and real estate experts who understand industrial areas and can help them both craft a vision and practical approach for redeveloping the area.

6. **Economic Development Updates**

The City Engineering Department held its first public meeting on potential improvements to the New Haven Green including both infrastructure improvements and new amenities including a café,

permanent stage and playground for children. The project is still in its early stages but has generated lots of discussion and interest citywide. Commissioners will be apprised of the next public meeting and other opportunities for public comment as the project progresses

Avelo Airlines new routes: Avelo is at almost 3 million passengers since coming to Tweed in 2021. They just added 4 new destinations bringing the current total to 31. Tweed also now has a second airline, Breeze Airways, the first time in 30 years that Tweed has had more than one carrier. The Tweed team is aware of the traffic congestion caused during peak travel weeks and is working with the City on creating new traffic patterns via both roadway improvements and on-site traffic pattern changes. The success of air service at Tweed that can at times lead to traffic congestion underscores the need to build the planned larger, modern terminal on the existing airport footprint.

Commissioners asked for an update on the new terminal and City staff noted that Tweed is working with the Town of East Haven and the State of Connecticut to try to come to an agreement to allow the new terminal to be constructed. A couple of issues need to be addressed before construction can begin: there is an appeal in federal court of the environmental assessment which is fairly common in airport expansion projects and the other is on-going negotiations with East Haven where the new terminal would be located. City staff are hopeful an agreement can be reached soon.

Square 10 update: Spinnaker's redevelopment of the former Coliseum site, was approved by the Development Commission over ten years ago and is a prime example of a land disposition agreement that would come before the Development Commission for their input and approval. Phase 1a of the project is completed and leasing. There are 200 units in this phase with 20 % of the units affordable as well as a commercial component on the lower floors. Elm City Market will relocate there along with a new restaurant (the Melting Pot) and a third retail space. There will also be a public plaza meant to further activate the area. Phase 1c will be comprised of a bioscience tower whose development was slowed by Covid and the accompanying rise in construction costs however the City feels confident they will soon be able to announce a finalized deal with developer Ancora to get the project started.

River Street RFQ: The City issued an RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for a mixed-use development of 100 and 142 River Street (old Hess site) that closed in late November. Bids were opened right before Christmas and City staff will put a team together to review them and also report back to the Commission as well. City staff is excited to share some of the concepts with the Commission. The bids are generally proposing projects with a maritime mixed-use development that include significant new housing but also leaves some room for further development. There will also be a public walkway with waterfront access. City staff remarked that this is one of the last large undeveloped areas in the city.

2025 Work Plan for the Commission: Mill River and downtown will continue to be a focus. It was also noted that the City team has been spending a lot of time on the development of New Haven's "Innovation Cluster" focused on bioscience and Quantum computing building on the strength of New Haven's bioscience sector, the promising work being undertaken by the Yale/UConn consortium Quantum CT and Yale's groundbreaking investment in places like Science Hill on Whitney and Prospect. The State of CT recently released an Innovation Cluster RFI ("Request for Information") that the City responded to late last year. In early 2025 the State will invite selected applicants to apply for the larger \$100 million Innovation Cluster Fund. City staff is hopeful to be

selected to apply for the next round and should receive word soon. The Commission will continue to receive regular updates and have its members tapped for their expertise where applicable

Adjournment:

Mr. Eyzaguirre adjourned the meeting via a unanimous motion to close at approximately 9:45 am.