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New Haven Development Commission

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Michael Piscitelli
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Meeting Minutes Regular Meeting Wednesday, October 8, 2025 In Person/Online Meeting

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Miguel Pittman (Virtual)
Casey Pickett
Alder Caroline Tanbee Smith (Virtual)
Doug Coffin
Dan McLeggon
Rebecca Weiner

CITY AND EDC STAFF PRESENT:

Michael Piscitelli, Economic Development Administrator
Carlos Eyzaguirre, Deputy Economic Development Administrator
Mark Wilson, Manager Neighborhood Commercial Development
Giovanni Zinn, City Engineer

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was opened by Chair Miguel Pittman Sr. at approximately 8:41 am.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Opening and Procedural Matters

Chair Pittman expressed concern regarding the late distribution of meeting materials, noting that last-minute information makes preparation difficult for board members and staff.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES – (CONTINUED)

Opening and Procedural Matters – (Continued)

Carlos acknowledged the issue, apologized, and committed to improving the timeline for distributing meeting packets and presentation decks.

The Chair officially passed facilitation to Vice Chair Casey Pickett to ensure smoother proceedings.

The Commission agreed to table the August and September minutes.

Administrative Updates

- Meeting minutes to be circulated at least 48 hours prior to meetings.
- Presentation materials or slide decks to be distributed at least 24 hours in advance to allow time for review.
- Members discussed the feasibility of sharing draft or partially completed materials earlier to assist with preparation.
- Carlos noted challenges in preparing decks early due to last-minute data updates and confidentiality considerations.

STATE AND GEORGE REDEVELOPMENT PROGRESS REPORT

Presenter: Giovanni Zinn, City Engineer

The State Street realignment project was discussed in detail.

Purpose of the project:

- Restore State Street to its original two-way configuration (prior to expansion in the late 1980s).
- Enhance pedestrian safety, improve bike infrastructure, and provide better urban connectivity.
- Support economic and housing development by unlocking underutilized parcels along the corridor.

Funding and Schedule:

- Project is supported by a \$7 million grant from the State of Connecticut (CT Communities Challenge Grant).
- Currently in construction Phase 2, with completion expected in mid-2026.

STATE AND GEORGE REDEVELOPMENT PROGRESS REPORT – (CONTINUED)

Design Features:

- One traffic lane in each direction, with dedicated bike lanes and turn lanes at intersections.
- Concurrent pedestrian crossings and signal adjustments to prioritize safety and flow.
- Raised crosswalks to reduce speeding; community feedback has been largely positive.

Traffic and Parking Considerations:

- Efforts made to preserve on-street parking on both sides of the street.
- Additional loading zones and turn lanes to accommodate delivery and service vehicles.
- Coordination with public safety and police departments to ensure emergency access.

Development Projects – State Street Parcels A and B

Discussion led by Carlos and Mark (Housing Team)

Parcel A (Site A):

- Land Disposition Agreement (LDA) approved by the Board of Alders.
- Construction scheduled to begin in mid-2026.

Parcel B (Site B):

- Located on long-term parking lots currently being redeveloped.
- Community meeting held with nearby stakeholders.
- Concerns raised about building aesthetics and design harmony with existing downtown structures.
- Issues identified regarding dumpster access for neighboring businesses (Trader's Block); an easement will be created to maintain access.

Parking and Housing Details:

- Approximately 80 parking spaces for 174 housing units (0.5 spaces per unit).
- Includes both market-rate and deeply affordable units, meeting inclusionary housing requirements.
- Some units will be designated for Section 8 voucher holders.

Retail and Long-Term Use:

- Limited retail space planned on-site, with consideration for future conversion potential of ground-floor spaces.
- Commissioners emphasized the importance of designing buildings adaptable for future commercial use.

STATE AND GEORGE REDEVELOPMENT PROGRESS REPORT – (CONTINUED)

Development Projects – State Street Parcels A and B – (Continued)

Coordination with City Engineering:

- Ongoing efforts to align infrastructure work between development and City engineering projects to prevent redundancy.

Next Steps:

- Another community meeting will be held.
- Formal presentation to the NHDC will be forthcoming by end of 2025.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATES

Acknowledgment of Yale Professor Michel Devoret’s Nobel Prize in physics and the ongoing partnership between the Yale Quantum Institute and the city’s development initiatives.

Discussion of Union Station retail offerings:

- Commissioners noted that current retail options are limited and do not reflect New Haven’s quality food and beverage culture.
- Plans are underway for merchant recruitment and storefront improvement.
- Outreach to potential tenants and marketing efforts are expected to begin in winter, following initial trade show appearances in December.

Community Investment Fund (CIF) Awards

The Armory Building received approximately \$6.75 million in CIF grant funding.

Funds will be used to bring the structure to a 'gray box' condition, including:

- Roof and parapet repair
- ADA-compliant elevator installation
- Mold remediation and structural restoration

This work will stabilize the building for future redevelopment opportunities.

Surplus School Properties

Two surplus school buildings to be released for Request for Proposals (RFP):

- Former West Hills School (Valley Street)
- Former Quinnipiac East School (Quinnipiac Ave/Lexington Ave)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UPDATES – (CONTINUED)

Surplus School Properties – (Continued)

The closures result from declining enrollment and the high cost of modernization.

Both structures date from the mid-20th century and require substantial rehabilitation.

The RFP will be released in October or November.

DISCUSSION

Chapel Street Two-Way Conversion

Discussion of proposed conversion between Temple Street and York Street.

A test run was conducted with the fire department; the department has signed off on the feasibility of the plan.

Planned modifications include:

- Addition of three loading zones to replace existing parking spaces.
- Adjustments at High Street for improved maneuverability of emergency vehicles.
- Coordination with museums to accommodate school bus loading in designated areas.

The Traffic Authority and City Public Safety Departments are conducting final review the proposal.

Commissioners expressed support for the conversion to promote slower traffic, safer pedestrian movement, and more accessible street use.

Additional Project and Work Plan Updates

Continued discussions planned regarding the River Street RFP.

Upcoming Community Meetings

- State and George Street Project: To be held before the November Development Commission meeting.
- Mill River Imagine Next Community Meeting 4: Tentatively scheduled for October 29 at 6:00 PM (location: Conte West Hills).
- Long Wharf Waterfront Business Community Meeting: November 7 at Brazi's. Will preview upcoming waterfront plans and engage local business owners.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Pittman called for any final discussion; none was raised.

A motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned after approximately one hour.