

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS** Approving the execution of a lease between the City of New Haven and Bigelow Square, LLC for a portion of Reuse Parcel "I," aka 198 River Street, in the River Street Municipal Development Project Area. (Office of Economic Development)

REPORT: 1522-05

ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

The River Street Municipal Development Project Plan (the "MDP"), established in 2002, created nine redevelopment parcels among the 25 acres of vacant or underutilized property within the 53-acre MDP area. The City has since acquired all but one acre of the designated property.

Capasso Restoration, Inc. operates a brick and stone structure restoration business and has renovated and maintained the 13,200 square foot building at 34 Lloyd Street, from which Capasso has been operating since 2008. In December, 2015, following an environmental remediation, the City conveyed 34 Lloyd Street to an affiliate of Capasso known as Lloyd Street Properties, LLC.

The property at 34 Lloyd Street is a portion of the original Parcel I. The City now proposes to transfer control of 198 River Street, which is the remaining portion of Parcel I, (subject to the retention of a strip of land for the proposed pedestrian riverfront walkway) to Bigelow Square, LLC, which is another affiliate of Capasso.

In accordance with the process previously used for 34 Lloyd Street, the proposal is to enter into a lease agreement with Bigelow, which will provide for an annual rent at one dollar and will provide that Bigelow will purchase the property at such time as the necessary environmental remediation has been carried out by the City. Pursuant to a grant from the State Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), the City is currently carrying out a Phase III Environmental Site Assessment at the Property. Following completion of the Assessment the City will seek funds for the preparation of a Remedial Action Plan (RAP) and, thereafter, remediation and, as various sections are completed, Bigelow shall purchase the same in accordance with the provisions contained in Section 205 of the attached form of a Land Disposition Agreement.

The Lease will also provide that, upon execution and delivery of the Lease, Bigelow will stabilize all of the buildings on the property and renovate them as remediation efforts proceed.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

This is the City's best chance to save the most historic buildings in the Bigelow complex. Last year, the most deteriorated structures on the Property were demolished and the remaining buildings abated, stabilized, and secured. Capasso has the experience and the motivation to renovate those buildings in a thorough and timely manner and work with the City on bringing attractive uses, new employment, and taxes to the community.

ADVICE

The Commission finds the Order in the best interest of the City and recommends approval.

ADOPTED: September 21, 2016
Edward Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA
Executive Director