

## NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

**RE:** FARMINGTON CANAL HERITAGE GREENWAY, Authority of the Mayor to acquire land and enter into easement agreements in order to complete phase IV of the Farmington Canal Heritage Greenway (City Plan Director).

**REPORT:** 1501-04

**ADVICE:** Approval

### BACKGROUND

The original 86-mile canal was opened in 1828, but the rapid advent of railroads resulted in a brief canal era that ended in New Haven with the abandonment of the canal in 1848. Subsequent rail operations ran on the former canal right-of-way until the 1980's. The New Haven portion of the right-of-way passed into public ownership in 1993 when it was purchased by the City with a grant from the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, with help from the Trust for Public Land.

The Master Plan for the Farmington Canal Heritage Greenway was completed in 1999, developing standards for materials and the on-street portions of Phase IV. Phase I construction of the New Haven portion of the Farmington Canal Greenway, from Lock Street to Munson Street, was completed in 2003 with principle funding provided through a DEP Bureau of Outdoor Recreation Grant. Phase 2, from Munson Street to Starr Street, was completed with funds provided under the TEA 21 High Priority Projects Program in 2006. Phase III, (Shelton Avenue to Hamden/New Haven town line) was completed in 2009. The City is nearing final design of Phase IV and has secured 80 percent federal funding and has agreed to match it with 20 percent non-federal funding in order to complete the Greenway from Temple Street to Canal Dock Road and Long Wharf Drive.

On September 4, 2007, the Board of Alders approved a Resolution that accepted funding, agreed to maintain, and authorized the Mayor to enter into contractual agreements necessary to complete the project. In order to complete Phase IV of the Greenway certain temporary and construction easements as well as permanent easements will be necessary.

The 2007 Resolution approved by the Board of Alders is included as an attachment.

### PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

The Order currently proposed is necessary because the original Resolution is not clear that the "contractual agreements" includes acquisition of land and permanent easements (both slope easements and easements over portions of the canal previously transferred to third parties) or temporary construction easements imposing certain obligations on the City for periods in excess of three (3) years. The Connecticut Department of Transportation would like the City to secure all easements prior to bidding, therefore approving the proposed order will enable conclusion of the land acquisitions and easement agreements and allow bidding of Phase IV to begin in time for a 2015 construction start.

### ADVICE

The Commission recommends approval of the proposed Order.

**ADOPTED:** January 21, 2015  
Edward Mattison  
Chair

**ATTEST:**   
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA  
Executive Director