

## **NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT**

**RE:** **ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS** Authorizing the City to apply for and accept a grant from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development not to exceed \$300,000 to support investigation and planning activities for the redevelopment of 198 River Street in the River Street Development Project Plan (MDP) area. (Office of Economic Development)

**REPORT:** 1503-09

**ADVICE:** Approval

### **BACKGROUND**

Before the Board is a Resolution approving the Office of Economic Development to apply for and accept up to \$300,000 in funding from the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development's (DECD) Historic Revitalization Grant Program.

The River Street Municipal Development Project Plan (MDP) was approved by the Board of Aldermen in 2002. It states as one of its five primary goals the renovation of the historic industrial buildings within the state and federally designated River Street Historic District.

The Bigelow Boiler complex is central to the historic character of the district. The city was able to acquire it in November, 2006, following a fire and destruction or deterioration of much of the complex. The most significant buildings that face River Street, however, remain primarily intact. Some wall re-pointing and roof replacement work was done on them in 2007, and a building stabilization, hazardous building materials abatement, and partial demolition project there is currently underway.

In order for the City to be able to move forward with negotiating a lease or sale of the buildings, further structural analysis and completion of environmental investigation of the property to be funded by this grant must occur. Once this information is obtained funds for environmental cleanup will be sought in concert with redevelopment options for the buildings.

### **PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS**

Over the past 13 years, the city has been challenged in meeting the goals of the River Street MDP due to the condition of the buildings when acquired in 2005/2006 and lack of funding to adequately stabilize them, to address subsurface environmental conditions on the property, and to abate hazardous building materials in the buildings.

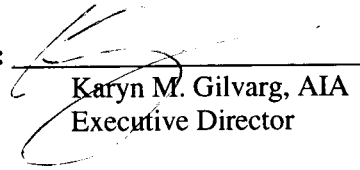
A project currently underway to stabilize, abate hazardous materials, and remove debris from the Bigelow Boiler buildings will allow the City to move closer to their redevelopment. DECD has made available historic revitalization grant funding of up to \$300,000 for planning activities, such as environmental assessment, structural surveys, and feasibility studies, to support redevelopment of historic industrial properties. Approval to apply for and accept such a grant from DECD would allow the city to move forward with options for returning this iconic industrial property to productive use.

**ADVICE**

The Commission finds the grant application in the best interest of the city and recommends approval.

**ADOPTED:** March 18, 2015  
Edward Mattison  
Chair

**ATTEST:**

  
Karyn M. Gilvarg, AIA  
Executive Director