

NEW HAVEN CITY PLAN COMMISSION ADVISORY REPORT

RE: **ORDER OF THE BOARD OF ALDERS** Authorizing the Mayor of the City of New Haven to submit an application to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Services, in an amount not to exceed \$500,000 over a period of three years, for the Food System Policy Division to partner with community members and organizations to identify, research, and develop a series of plans and activities that will create an enabling environment for urban agriculture, reducing barriers to entry and sustainability, and in which all residents will equitably benefit from the positive environmental, health, and socioeconomic outcomes. (Submitted by: Latha Swamy, Director of Food System Policy)

REPORT: **1570-06**

ADVICE: Approval

BACKGROUND

The Community Services Administration, Food System Policy Division is applying for funding in order to partner with community members and organizations to identify, research, and develop a series of plans and activities that will create an enabling environment for urban agriculture, reducing barriers to entry and sustainability, and in which all residents will equitably benefit from the positive environmental, health, and socioeconomic outcomes. The planned activities include: Researching best practices for zoning and ordinances regarding urban agriculture and updating New Haven’s zoning in alignment with the findings and community feedback, identifying - and ideally protecting - vacant land for community gardens and/or urban farms, researching equitable urban agriculture policy, development and programming that prioritizes vulnerable and disinvested communities and identifying and/or creating pathways to education, jobs and resources for new farmers. Furthermore, funding from the grant would be used to create a grant-funded staff position to help with project coordination, considering that the Food Systems Policy Division currently has no staff aside from the Director.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Pursuing funding opportunities to update land use and other City policies and develop programs based on best practices to promote urban agriculture and support local food systems complies with the City’s Comprehensive Plan:

New Haven Vision 2025:

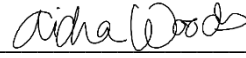
“Connect residents to healthy food by expressly permitting community gardens in all residential zones where they can build a sense of neighborhood identity” (III-19)

“Grow general quality of life and health of the residents in all neighborhoods by promoting access to healthy food and increasing access to open spaces/recreational areas through improved and well-connected transportation network.” (III-20)

ADVICE

The Commission recommends approval.

ADOPTED: June 17, 2020
Ed Mattison
Chair

ATTEST: 
Aicha Woods
Executive Director, City Plan Department