

PAD MEETING MINUTES
November 17, 2021

PRESENT: Hon. Gerald M. Antunes, BoA; Anna Festa, BoA; Steve Fontana, Economic Development; William Long, City Plan; Evan Trachten, LCI; Clay Williams, Business Development

Absent: Maurine Villani, Tax Office.

Meeting called to order at 3:01 PM

A motion to approve the PAD minutes from October 20, 2021 was made by Steve Fontana, seconded Alder Antunes, minutes approved unanimously.

New Business

31 Frank Street

Evan explained the City is proposing to sell this vacant single-family property for \$25,000. The applicant will rehabilitate the property and be an owner occupant for a minimum 10-year occupancy requirement. The City offered this property to the public in 2019 through an RFP but there were no responses. In 2020, the City looked into selling this property to create supportive housing but the neighbors and Alder did not support the proposal. Evan told the committee this property needs immediate attention because it has been sitting since 2018 and it is open to the elements. LCI also looked into developing this property but it would have sat idle for another year or two because of projects already in the pipeline. Based on conversations with the Alder and neighbors LCI has decided to move forward this this proposal.

The applicant has a home improvement contractor's license and the wherewithal to do this project (finances and skills). Mr. Luis R. Zaragoza is a resident of the Hill neighborhood. The property currently is in poor condition and is a "cat house", someone feeds cats and has placed a "cat condo" for shelter. The building is smelly and open to the elements. The property has a driveway and plenty of room for off-street parking. The house is bringing down the block. LCI also considered selling this property to an adjacent property owner named Fernando Naranja who rehabilitated a couple of properties on this street. The Alder supports this sale and use as an owner occupant.

Alder Antunes asked how we got this property. Evan told the committee we did a tax foreclosure in 2018 to acquire it. Clay Williams asked about the Applicant, what do we know about him? Evan told the committee the applicant is a licensed home improvement contractor with friends in the industry to assist him with the rehabilitation of this property. The applicant does landscaping and other construction work in our area. The applicant will likely subcontract the electrical and plumbing and do as much of the construction works himself to keep his rehabilitation costs down. Alder Festa asked about the occupancy, Evan confirmed that the applicant will reside in the property and there will be a 10-year minimum requirement. Steve Fontana asked about what recourse the City has if the property becomes a rental property. Evan told the committee that the City would send a Default letter and could take the property back because of the terms of the LDA. Clay asked how long the applicant have to complete the project? Evan told the committee the applicant will start the project within 90 days of closing, and has up to 18 months to complete the rehabilitation. Alder Festa asked if the structure is sound? Evan told the committee that currently the structure is okay , but if it sat for two more years it wouldn't be sound, that is why we are proposing to sell it now.

A motion was made by Steve Fontana to approve the proposal, seconded by Alder Antunes, Approved unanimously.

26 Stevens Street

Evan told the committee that this is a sliver lot sale, the lot is being split between the two adjacent property owners. One applicant is an owner occupant named Mr. Fleury who has lived on the street for about twenty years. Many years ago, Mr. Fleury was encouraged to fence off a portion of this lot while the City was preparing to foreclose on the parcel. Mr. Fleury has already paved and fenced his portion of the lot, he coordinated with LCI staff member Sam Foster many years ago and the paperwork to sell this land was never completed, the City took title to this land in 2009. Mr. Fleury will pay \$0.25 per square foot because he is an owner occupant, his purchase price is \$442.50.

The other applicant is Poindexter FS 28S, LLC who will pay \$1.50 per square foot as an investor for a purchase price of \$2,655.00. The owner of the LLC is a New Haven resident in the Hill neighborhood, she is currently renovating the property at 28 Stevens Street. They will create a driveway and off-street parking by acquiring this portion of land. Each applicant is purchasing a portion that is 15' X 118'. Evan told the committee Stevens Street is tight and having off-street parking is important. William Long noted the GIS map shows a structure on the parcel. Evan responded that it may be a shed, the applicant has been caring for his portion of the land for almost 20 years. William Long also asked about moving lot line. Evan explained that a Notice is put on the land records to merge the land, but only a class D survey is done so technically an A-2 F survey is required with a mylar map to truly merge the parcels. Evan noted that the Assessor's office merges the parcels in their system and the additional land is incorporated in the "mother parcel". Alder Antunes asked if Mr. Fleury already owns this land based on taking it over 20 years ago. Evan told the committee that one can't make an adverse possession claim against the City, the State of Connecticut, a public utility, or a local land trust under Connecticut law.

Alder Festa asked about the City's liability during the time Mr. Fleury had control of this land. Evan told the committee that the City had some liability. There are not many claims against the City due to situations like this one. Alder Festa asked, how many similar situations exist where residents occupy City owned sliver lots? Evan told the committee that he isn't aware of any others, when staff become aware, we contact the property owner to purchase the land. LCI staff are out there and monitor City owned lots, we maintain a list of City owned lots that need grass cutting and maintenance so we have a good sense of that we own. Alder Antunes asked about future taxes from this sale Evan told the committee that sliver lots are sold with a 10-year tax abatement and then a 5-year phase-in. Evan said that peoples' land assessed values increase a little based on adding additional lot area to their parcels. The land value in the Assessor's field card is much greater than what is added to the buyer's land value.

A motion was made by Alder Antunes to approve the sale to Mr. Fleury, seconded by Steve Fontana. Approved unanimously

A motion was made by Alder Festa to approve the sale to Poindexter FS 28S, LLC, seconded by Steve Fontana. Approved unanimously

PAD Guidelines

Evan has been working with attorney Pinto to revise the Guidelines. Attorney Pinto has made many edits for grammar and punctuation. Evan will provide 3 copies to the Committee for review; a clean copy of the current regulations, the marked-up version (Pinto's edits), and a new version clean copy. Evan thanked the PAD committee for their work this year and wished everyone happy holidays.

A motion to adjourn was made by Clay Williams, seconded by Alder Antunes, all were in favor.

Meeting Adjourned 3:30 P.M.