



DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING DIVISION
REPORT: 8-24 Review of Municipal Improvements at 525 Main Street
 for consideration October 26, 2021.

STAFF REPORT

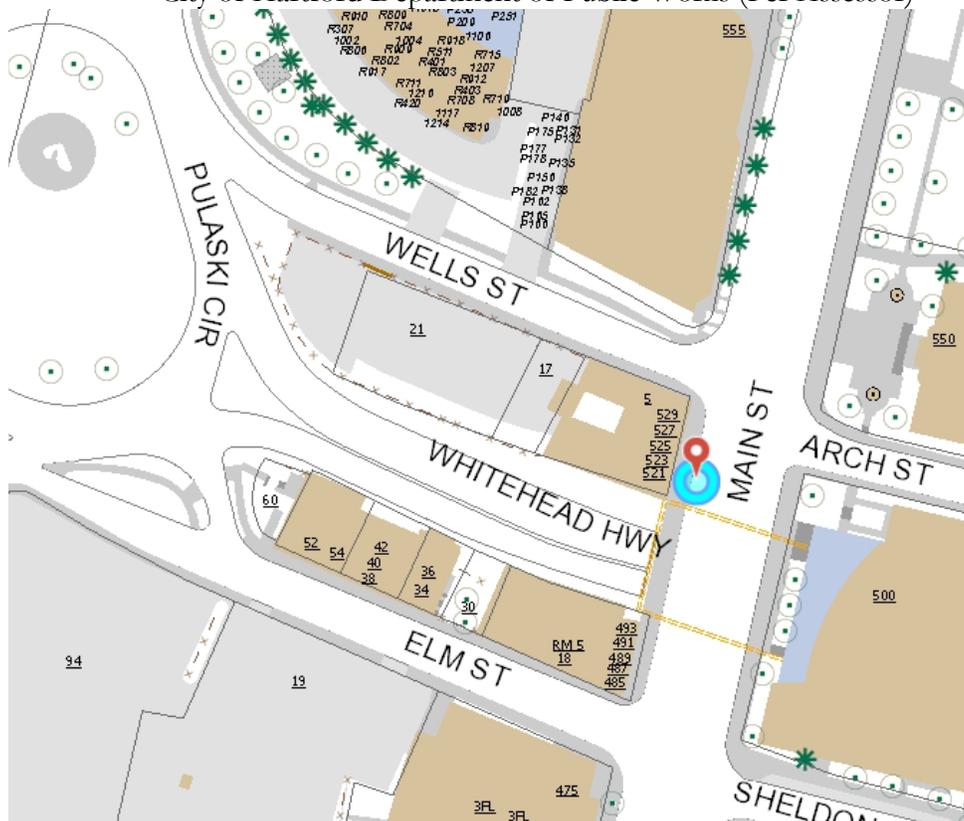
TO: Planning & Zoning Commission
PREPARED BY: Aimee Chambers, Planning Director
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PROJECT: Development Agreement and Ground Lease for
 525 Main Street
 And Lease/Sale Option for 17 & 21 Wells Streets
PARCEL ID: 247-451-212
P&Z-COMM-2021-0520

ZONE: DT-3, Downtown District
TYPE: Review of Municipal Improvements Per CGS Section 8-24

APPLICANT: Court of Common Council

OWNER: City of Hartford Department of Public Works (Per Assessor)



Overhead View – Hartford GIS 2021

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Referral notice dated October 12, 2021 - Communication from Mayor Bronin to the Court of Common Council subject to review and approval of a Term Sheet for the project, to enter into a development agreement and ground lease with the development team of Wonder Works Construction Corp. of 525 Main Street and Lease/Sale Option for 17 & 21 Wells Street.

KEY APPLICATION TIMELINES

- Referral Date – October 12, 2021
- Date Received: October 13, 2021
- Scheduled to be heard by PZC on Tuesday, October 26, 2021;
- Council Public Hearing Date: October 18, 2021;
- Council Meeting Date: Monday October 25, 2021

LEGAL STANDARD

Standard for Application Type:

The Commission advises the city council and city agencies about municipal improvements in accordance with 8-24 of the general statutes and section 1.3.10 of the Zoning Regulations. The Commission must primarily consider whether the municipal improvement will be completed in a manner consistent with the comprehensive plan of development.

STANDARD SPECIFIC TO THE USE

CT GS Section 8-24;

Zoning Regulations Section 1.3.10: Review of Municipal Improvements

C. Review Criteria:

- (1) In reviewing proposals for municipal improvements, the commission shall focus primarily on whether the municipal improvement will be completed in a manner consistent with the comprehensive plan of development.
- (2) The Commission shall not base its decision solely on financial matters (including but not limited to the cost to the city of the municipal improvement).

Plan of Conservation & Development

Eight Overall Priorities

Density - fill vacant lots, attract new visitors, and increase residential population by 10% throughout the city

Grow400 – Construction across the city: Facilitated new construction and rehabilitation in all parts of the city, growing the grand list and creating jobs.

COMMENTS RECEIVED (DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES, NRZs, PUBLIC)

No comments have been received.

ANALYSIS

The Economic Development Division has submitted a resolution to Council to enter into a development agreement with Wonder Works Construction Corp for the development of three city

owned property located at Main and Wells Street. Wonder Works responded to an RFP that the Economic Development Division put out in early 2021.

In accordance with 8-24 of the general statutes and section 1.3.10 of the Zoning Regulations, the Planning and Zoning Commission must consider whether the disposition is aligned with the City's Plan of Conservation and Development and make recommendation back to Council who will then take action on the request. Planning Division staff have communicated to the Clerk's office that the next regularly scheduled PZC meeting since the date of referral is after the Council meeting. Staff expect the Clerk's office to communicate this to Council on October 25.

The property has been underutilized since the Department of Public Works moved to Jennings Road. The developer plans to convert the existing office building on Main into a mixed-use development featuring commercial space fronting Main Street. The project will contain 20% workforce housing with rents geared towards those between 80-120% of the AMI. The developer intend to lease 17 and 21 Wells Street. In the immediate future it is anticipated that these will remain a parking use. The Council Resolution notes an option to purchase and to submit an approved redevelopment plan and timeline at that time.

The Plan of Conservation and Development's (PoCD) Eight Overall Priorities includes density; to fill vacant lots, attract new visitors, and increase residential population by 10% throughout the city. Furthermore, the Grow400 section indicated that new construction and rehabilitation in all parts of the city is a priority, as well as growing the grand list and creating jobs. This project will bring another 41 residential units online in the downtown footprint as well as activate commercial storefront space. It is worth noting that the Grow400 Avenues Section recommends developing our surface parking lots in the interest of knitting the street wall back together. While the delayed development of 17 & 21 Wells is not ideal, Staff are in support of the plan to have the developer submit a plan and timeline for the delivery of such plan related to the development of these parcels.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of this application.

A draft resolution follows.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Court of Common Council Referral dated October 12, 2021
2. Letter from the Mayor to the Council President dated October 12, 2021

REVIEWED AND EDITED BY,

Aimee Chambers, Director



CITY OF HARTFORD
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION
525 MAIN STREET
8-24 REVIEW OF MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENTS

Whereas, The City of Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission reviewed the referral from the Court of Common Council regarding a purchase and sale of City owned property at 525 Main Street to Wonder Works Construction for redevelopment into a mixed-use building; and

Whereas, The referral was received from the Court of Common Council on October 13, 2021; and

Whereas, The subject property is located in the DT-3, Downtown district; and

Whereas, The role of the Planning & Zoning Commission in an 8-24 review is primarily to determine whether the municipal improvement will be completed in a manner consistent with the comprehensive plan of development; and

Whereas, The proposed improvement is consistent with the stated goals of the Plan of Conservation & Development in that:

The Eight Overall Priorities names density - to fill vacant lots, attract new visitors, and increase residential population by 10% throughout the city; and

The Grow400 Section names – Construction across the city: Facilitated new construction and rehabilitation in all parts of the city, growing the grand list and creating jobs.

Now therefore Be It

Resolved, The City of Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission hereby **recommends/does not recommend** approval of the conveyance of City owned property at 525 Main Street to Wonder Works Construction, per referral from the Court of Common Council on October 12, 2021.

Be It Further,

Resolved, This 26th day of October, 2021.