



DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT SERVICES – PLANNING DIVISION
REPORT: 8-24 Review of Municipal Improvements at 150 Windsor Street
 for consideration January 25, 2022.

STAFF REPORT

TO: Planning & Zoning Commission
PREPARED BY: Evelyne St-Louis, Senior Planner (evelyne.st-louis@hartford.gov)

PROJECT: Lease Agreement for Temporary Access and Use of City-Owned Property
 150 Windsor Street
 PARCEL ID: 267-292-011
 COMM-2022-0565

ZONE: CX-1, Commercial Industrial Mix District, with the Connecticut River Overlay

TYPE: Review of Municipal Improvements Per Connecticut General Statutes Section 8-24

APPLICANT: Court of Common Council

OWNER: City of Hartford

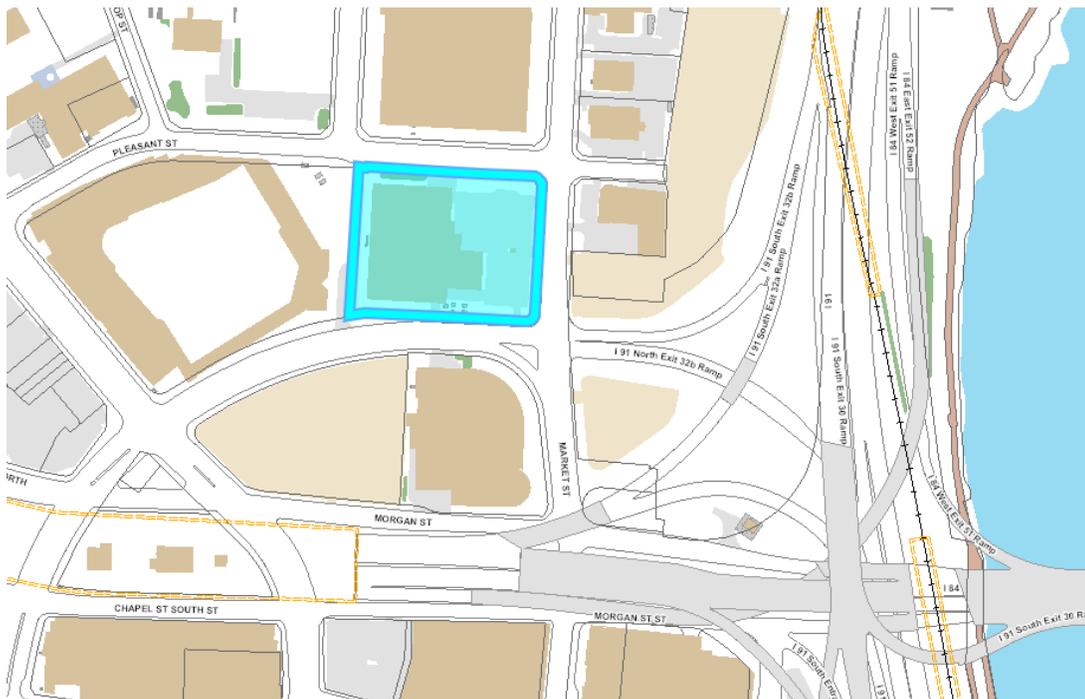


Figure 1. Overhead View – Hartford GIS 2022

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The application is an 8-24 Review of Municipal Improvements. The referral notice, dated January 10, 2022, is a communication from Mayor Bronin to the Court of Common Council regarding a proposed resolution that would authorize the City to enter into a Lease Agreement with RMS DONO I, LLC ("RMS"). The Lease Agreement would allow RMS temporary access and use of City-owned property at 150 Windsor Street (commonly known as DoNo Parcel D or the Data Center). The Lease Agreement would be for a term of two years with an option to extend.

KEY APPLICATION TIMELINES

- Referral Date: January 10, 2022
- Date Received: January 13, 2022
- Scheduled to be heard by the Planning & Zoning Commission: Tuesday January 25, 2022
- Council Public Hearing Date: January 17, 2022.
- Council Meeting Date: February 14, 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

Connecticut General Statutes 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

Relevant goals of the POCD listed by action area.

Grow400: A more prosperous economy

- **Build the Transformative Projects:** Realizing these projects will knit parts of our community back together physically, while helping to catalyze growth and foster a sense of unity and pride.
 - **Downtown North (“DoNo”) is one of these Transformative Project Areas.** DoNo seeks to position the Downtown North project as the gateway from downtown to North Main and Albany Avenues, and ensure that Clay Arsenal benefits from amenities and opportunities that follow.
- **Grow the grand list:** Increasing the tax base by promoting development, particularly in the opportunity, enterprise, and North Hartford Promise zones, will stabilize city finances and expand services.

- **Infill, infill, infill:** Building on vacant and underutilized lots across the city will raise property values, reduce blight, and create cohesive neighborhoods.
- **Fast-track new construction projects**

Live400: A more equitable community

- **Build 5,000 new housing units**
- **Increase homeownership by 50%**

COMMENTS RECEIVED (DEPARTMENTS, AGENCIES, NRZs, PUBLIC)

No comments had been received as of the time of writing.

ANALYSIS

The City and RMS entered into a Development Agreement for the redevelopment of several City-owned properties near Dunkin' Donuts Park, commonly known as Downtown North (“DoNo”) and recently changed to North Crossing. Construction of a new mixed-use building at 1212 Main Street (Parcel C) began in Fall 2020.

To ensure smooth operations during the construction phase of Parcel C, RMS has requested permission to access and use a portion of the city-owned parcel at 150 Windsor St (Parcel D) to temporarily store materials and equipment, operate a trailer, and accept deliveries. In exchange, RMS has stated they would clean-up overgrown vegetation on the site, install and maintain a construction fence and decorative scrim, remove the stockpiled soil in the paved parking lot along Market Street, and maintain the property during the duration of the term. On July 22, 2021 the City and RMS entered into a License Agreement that granted RMS temporary access and use of 150 Windsor Street for a term of six months. That agreement is set to expire on January 18, 2022.

For this reason, Mayor Bronin has now submitted a resolution to the Court of Common Council on January 10, 2022 that would authorize the City to enter into a Lease Agreement with RMS for temporary access and use of 150 Windsor Street for a term of two years, with an option to extend.

In accordance with Section 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 POCD and make recommendation back to Council who will then act on the request. The Clerk’s office anticipates that the recommendation made by the Planning and Zoning Commission on this matter will be communicated to the Council on Monday February 14, 2022.

The subject property at 150 Windsor Street is currently used as a data center, and as stated above, has already been use for temporary storage by RMS for the last six months. Also, pursuant to Section 1.3 of the Development Agreement, upon satisfactory achievement of key milestones set forth in the agreement, the Developer will have the option to elect to develop another of the three remaining Parcels (Parcels A, B, and D) that together with Parcel C comprise the property referenced in the Development Agreement.

An overarching priority of the POCD is to build out the City’s ten Transformative Project Areas, including the DoNo project. The POCD also states other high-level goals such as encouraging infill development and increasing density citywide, growing the city’s tax base “grand list”, and fast-

tracking new development when possible. Staff finds that the proposed Lease Agreement is consistent with the POCD's stated goals for the following reasons:

- The primary purpose of the agreement is to facilitate construction on Parcel C and support the DoNo project moving forward more generally;
- The agreement to use Parcel D is only temporary (two years with option to extend);
- RMS has proposed to upkeep and maintain the property throughout the agreement; and
- Parcel D remains eligible for redevelopment as part of the DoNo project at a later phase.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of this application.

A draft resolution follows.

ATTACHMENTS

None

REVIEWED AND EDITED BY,

Aimee Chambers, Director



CITY OF HARTFORD
PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION RESOLUTION
150 WINDSOR STREET
8-24 REVIEW OF MUNICIPAL IMPROVEMENTS INVOLVING THE SALE AND
REDEVELOPMENT OF A FORMER HARTFORD CITY FIREHOUSE

- Whereas,** The City of Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission reviewed the referral from the Court of Common Council regarding a Lease Agreement for Temporary Access and Use of City-Owned Property at 150 Windsor Street by RMS DONO I, LLC ("RMS"); and
- Whereas,** The referral was received from the Court of Common Council on January 10, 2022; and
- Whereas,** The subject property is located in the CX-1, Commercial Industrial Mix District, with the Connecticut River Overlay; and
- Whereas,** The purpose of the Lease Agreement is to facilitate the construction of a new mixed-use building at 1212 Main Street (Parcel C), which began in the Fall of 2020 as part of the larger Downtown North ("DoNo") project area, by allowing RMS, the project developer, to temporarily store materials and equipment, operate a trailer, and accept deliveries; 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 agreement is consistent with the stated goals of the Plan of Conservation & Development in that it will help achieve the goal of building the ten Transformative Project Areas – namely the Downtown North project area – as well as help achieve other goals such as encouraging infill development and increasing density citywide, growing the city's tax base "grand list", and fast-tracking new development when possible.
- Now therefore Be It
- Resolved,** The City of Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission hereby **recommends/does not recommend** approval of Lease Agreement for Temporary Access and Use of City-Owned Property at 150 Windsor Street by RMS, per referral from the Court of Common Council on January 10, 2022.

Be It Further,

Resolved, This 25th day of January, 2022.