

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

**TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING
September 13, 2022, 6:15 p.m.,
Legislative Chambers**

**Re:: Ordinance Making an Appropriation for
the Replacement of Tennis Courts at Conard
High School and Hall High School in an Amount
not to Exceed \$495,000 in the Capital
Improvement Fund for Fiscal Year 2022-2023
and Authorizing the Issuance of Bonds in an
Amount not to Exceed \$495,000 to Fund the
Appropriation.**

A p p e a r a n c e s:

Town Council Members Present:

MAYOR SHARI CANTOR

LEON DAVIDOFF

ALBERTO CORTES

ADRIENNE BILLINGS-SMITH

CAROL BLANKS

BEN WENOGRAD

LIAM SWEENEY

MARY FAY

RICH LEDWITH,

TOWN MANAGER

ESSIE LABROT

Town Clerk

1 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** We are
2 **calling the 6:15 public hearing to order.**

3 This is an ordinance making an
4 **appropriation for the replacement of tennis**
5 **courts at Conard High School and Hall High**
6 **School in an amount not to exceed 495,000 in**
7 **the Capital Improvement Fund for fiscal year**
8 **2022-2023, and authorizing the issuance of**
9 **bonds in an amount not to exceed 495 to fund**
10 **the appropriation.**

11 **Rollcall, Ms. Labrot?**

12 **MS. LABROT:**

13 **Ms. Billings-Smith?**

14 **COUNCILOR BILLINGS-SMITH:**

15 **Present.**

16 **MS. LABROT: Ms. Blanks?**

17 **COUNCILOR BLANKS: Present.**

18 **MS. LABROT: Ms. Cantor?**

19 **PRESIDENT CANTOR: Here.**

20 **MS. LABROT: Mr. Cortes?**

21 **COUNCILOR CORTES: Here.**

22 **MS. LABROT: Mr. Davidoff?**

23 **COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Here.**

24 **MS. LABROT: Ms. Fay?**

25 **COUNCILOR FAY: Present.**

1 MS. LABROT: Mr. Sweeney?

2 COUNCILOR SWEENEY: Here.

3 MS. LABROT: Mr. Wenograd?

4 COUNCILOR WENOGRAD: Here.

5 MS. LABROT: And

6 Mr. Zydanowicz is absent.

7 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you.

8 He is coming. Yeah, he is on his way. He
9 was working tonight. Okay.

10 So presentation -- I'll go to
11 the Town Manager.

12 MR. LEDWITH: Thank you, Madam
13 mayor.

14 As outlined by the Mayor, the
15 purpose of tonight's public hearing is to
16 seek authorization from the Council to
17 appropriate an amount not to exceed 495,000
18 in the Capital Improvement Plan to replace
19 the 25-year-old tennis courts at both Hall
20 High School and Conard High School.

21 You may recall that thanks to
22 the hard work of our West Hartford
23 delegation, we have received \$3 million in
24 funding from the State Bond Commission to
25 cover the cost of this project last spring.

1 We have since issued an RFP
2 for the court replacement, and the one bid we
3 received came in at \$3,354,500, or 12 percent
4 higher than the original estimate primarily
5 due to the higher cost of materials brought
6 on by the inflationary environment we are
7 presently experiencing.

8 The adoption of this
9 resolution will provide the Town with
10 sufficient funds, an additional \$495,000 to
11 cover the total cost of the project. As I
12 said, the bid came in at \$3,354,000. We're
13 asking for an appropriation of \$495,000 in
14 the event that there's any kind of cost
15 overruns during the construction time period.

16 We expect that there won't
17 be -- and in the event that that happens we
18 will only expend the \$354,000.

19 The Town has hired Classic
20 Turf Company out of Woodbury, Connecticut.
21 Classic Turf recently completed the tennis
22 courts and pickleball courts at Buena Vista,
23 a project that it's recently completed this
24 past spring.

25 So that concludes this, my

1 presentation. I'm happy to answer any
2 questions that the Council has.

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
4 Mr. Ledwith. Any questions for the Town
5 Manager?

6 Ms. Fay?

7 COUNCILOR FAY: Yes, thank
8 you. Can you refresh my memory, when will
9 the courts be done?

10 MR. LEDWITH: They will be
11 done by spring. Our goal is to have these
12 ready for the spring tennis season.

13 COUNCILOR FAY: Great. That
14 was my question. Thank you.

15 MR. LEDWITH: You're welcome.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Good
17 question. Any other questions, comments?

18
19 (No response.)

20
21 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. So
22 we have one person signed up, Brian Clarke.

23 You have three minutes to
24 speak. Just state your name and your address
25 for the record.

1 And that is automatic; when
2 you speak it will go on.

3 BRIAN CLARKE: Yes, my name is
4 Brian Clarke. I live at 220 Beechwood Road,
5 which directly borders the tennis courts at
6 Conard.

7 For the record, demolition of
8 that tennis court started yesterday without
9 warning to any of the neighbors.

10 I'll state up front I have no
11 concerns with the finance aspect of this.
12 That's not always -- I'm not quite sure it's
13 the exact scope of this hearing, but my
14 concern is with plans for the courts
15 themselves. They have torn out all the
16 landscaping along the border of my property,
17 torn out -- started tearing out all of the
18 courts.

19 We spent the day Monday boxing
20 up glass items that were -- would be vibrated
21 off the shelves otherwise. And to be honest
22 with you, this happened 25 years ago when
23 they did the courts the last time. And they
24 started the construction and the compacting
25 of the property without any warning

1 whatsoever, and we had glass objects falling
2 off shelves onto the floor.

3 So always with these projects
4 I think the concern is the neighbors directly
5 abutting the properties should get some kind
6 of advanced warning of what's going on, and
7 when it's going to start so that you can
8 prepare for things like this.

9 My other concern is what the
10 plans would be for replacing the landscaping,
11 the privacy along that particular area of the
12 fence and access from that corner of the
13 tennis court -- which the last two times the
14 tennis courts were built, the access door
15 opens onto my property instead of onto town
16 property.

17 And if and when the plans are
18 available -- I don't know if there's going to
19 be separate hearings about the actual plans.
20 I would like to, you know, voice an opinion
21 that if there's going to be an access doorway
22 near that corner of the of the courts, that
23 they be placed on the street side of the
24 fence, and preferably away from the corner of
25 the courts -- as opposed to directly at the

1 corner opening onto my property.

2 I know with pulling out the
3 trees that are there now, that's
4 potentially -- I know the courts will have to
5 have their own drainage issues, and I just
6 want to be sure that, you know, my yard will
7 continue to drain -- will drain properly as
8 this is being constructed.

9 So my larger point, I guess,
10 is more about the courts themselves and the
11 always ongoing concern that the, you know,
12 the neighbors directly affected by
13 construction should probably get some kind of
14 an advanced warning and not be woken up at
15 7 a.m. on Monday morning to the sound of
16 chainsaws and people throwing metal bars all
17 around.

18 Beyond that I really don't
19 have too much to add at this point.

20 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
21 Mr. Clarke. I'm glad you came and spoke to
22 us. It is outside of this public hearing's
23 subject, but we do take your comments
24 extremely seriously.

25 And I'm sure we will be

1 directing the Town Manager to follow up and
2 figure out a communication plan, and answer
3 your questions.

4 BRIAN CLARKE: Thank you.
5 Appreciate that.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.
7 Thank you so much.

8 All right. Is there anybody
9 else? No.

10 And Mr. Ledwith, do you want
11 to say something before Mr. Clarke leaves?

12 MR. LEDWITH: Yes. First, on
13 behalf of the Town I do apologize for the
14 lack of notice. Mr. Clarke, that absolutely
15 should have happened, and I will speak to the
16 team that's working on the project.

17 And then I'd like to talk to
18 you outside in the hallway, get your
19 information.

20 BRIAN CLARKE: Sure,
21 absolutely.

22 MR. LEDWITH: And we'll be
23 back in touch with you in terms of what the
24 bordering of the tennis courts and your
25 property will look like. And certainly we'll

1 ensure that the doorway does not exit onto
2 your property, and it does go onto town
3 property for sure. So thank you.

4 BRIAN CLARKE: All right.
5 Thank you.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: All right.
7 Questions by Town Council? Followup?

8 Okay. Mr. Davidoff?

9 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: With that
10 said, through you Madam Mayor to the Town
11 Manager.

12 I presume that in the bid that
13 we have before us for the construction of the
14 tennis courts, there's adequate funding in
15 place to make certain that Mr. Clarke and
16 anybody else who may abut this property, the
17 situation upon the completion of the
18 construction of these new courts will put him
19 in the same position as he was prior to the
20 construction.

21 So that he still would have
22 privacy and not have to undergo any type of
23 drainage remediation to be incurred by
24 himself?

25 MR. LEDWITH: Absolutely.

1 **COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF:** I just
2 wanted to get that on the record. Thank you.

3 **MR. LEDWITH:** That is
4 confirmed, yeah, on the record. Thank you.

5 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Thank you,
6 Mr. Davidoff. Thank you, Mr. Ledwith.

7 Anything else? Ms. Blanks?

8 **COUNCILOR BLANKS:** Thank you.
9 Through you Mayor, and Mr. Ledwith and to
10 Mr. Clarke.

11 These are just some of the
12 things that I've noticed with some of the
13 construction going around town, especially
14 with properties that are abutting the
15 construction. And I'm thinking in particular
16 the one on Prospect where the woman had come
17 in and was concerned about the construction
18 that was going on beside her property.

19 So on that note for
20 Mr. Clarke -- and I'm going to assume that
21 this is going to be done anyway. During the
22 construction will there be some type of
23 barrier erected, you know, providing privacy
24 for the neighbor or other neighbors that are
25 in and around that tennis court?

1 And I speak from experience,
2 because I remember when I was a little girl
3 something like that happened around our
4 property, and my mom was pretty adamant about
5 that. And the head of the project made
6 certain that we would not be disturbed by all
7 of the construction, so.

8 MR. LEDWITH: Thank you,
9 Councilor Blanks.

10 I will ensure that that, in
11 fact, does happen. I'll talk to the team
12 that I've been managing, you know -- but
13 without speaking with them -- that we would,
14 in fact, provide that barrier during the
15 construction period -- but I'll confirm that.

16 Thank you.

17 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you,
18 Ms. Blanks. Thank you, Mr. Ledwith.

19 Anybody else?

20
21 (No response.)

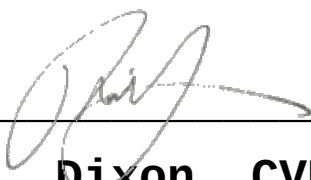
22
23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. With
24 that, I will close the public hearing -- and
25 you can get the information. Okay? And will

1 open at 6:30. So a five-minute break.

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3 (Whereupon, the above proceedings
4 were concluded at 6:25 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 14 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the Public Hearing In Re: ORDINANCE MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF TENNIS COURTS AT CONARD HIGH SCHOOL AND HALL HIGH SCHOOL IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$495,000 IN THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND FOR FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 AND AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$495,000 TO FUND THE APPROPRIATION, held before the West Hartford Town Council, at Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Room 314, West Hartford, Connecticut, on September 13, 2022.


Robert G. Dixon, CVR-M 857
My Commission Expires:
6/30/2025