

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

FEBRUARY 28, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS

**Re: Application of Steele Road, LLC to amend the
boundaries of SDD #139 located at 243 Steele Road
and SDD #33 located at 253-275 Steele Road and
2021 Albany Avenue by rezoning a portion of SDD
#139 to SDD #33 and rezoning a portion of SDD #33
to SDD #139**

DEBRA A. CHASSE, CSR #00055

APPEARANCES:

Town Council Members Present:

SHARI CANTOR, MAYOR

LIAM SWEENEY, DEPUTY MAYOR

CAROL BLANKS

ALBERTO CORTES

LEON DAVIDOFF

DEBRA POLUN

BEN WENOGRA

MARK ZYDANOWICZ

ALSO PRESENT:

RICK LEDWITH, TOWN MANAGER

ESSIE LABROT, TOWN CLERK/COUNCIL CLERK

DALLAS DODGE, CORPORATION COUNSEL

1 MAYOR CANTOR: We are calling the 7
2 p.m. public hearing to order. This is the application
3 of Steele Road, LLC to amend the boundaries of SDD #139
4 located at 243 Steele Road and SDD #33 located at
5 253-275 Steele Road and 2021 Albany Avenue by rezoning
6 a portion of SDD #139 to SDD #33 and rezoning a portion
7 of SDD #33 to SDD #139.

8 We'll begin by role call, Miss
9 Labrot.

10 MS. LABROT: Miss Blanks.

11 MS. BLANKS: Here.

12 MS. LABROT: Miss Cantor.

13 MAYOR CANTOR: Here.

14 MS. LABROT: Mr. Cortes.

15 MR. CORTES: Here.

16 MS. LABROT: Mr. Davidoff.

17 MR. DAVIDOFF: Here.

18 MS. LABROT: Miss Fay.

19 MS. FAY: Here.

20 MS. LABROT: Miss Poulin.

21 MS. POULIN: Here.

22 MS. LABROT: Mr. Sweeney.

23 MR. SWEENEY: Here.

24 MS. LABROT: Mr. Wenograd.

25 MR. WENOGRAD: Here.

1 MS. LABROT: Mr Zydanowicz.

2 MR. ZYDANOWICZ: Here.

3 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Miss
4 Labrot. We will now begin the presentation. Thank
5 you.

6 MR. SEIGER: Thank you. Good
7 evening, Mayor Cantor, members of the West Hartford
8 Town Council. My name is Jeff Seiger. I'm here on
9 behalf of 243 Steele Road. So we're here this evening
10 to discuss with you a lot line modification between the
11 property located at 243 Steele Road and the land to the
12 north of it. The land to the north is owned by the
13 Mercy Community, also better known as the McAuley.

14 So in its current condition the site
15 drive for the McAuley is located on land owned by 243
16 Steele Road. And, of course, they have an easement to
17 use that, but they would rather own it and be a simple
18 title. So what we are proposing to do is to convey to
19 the McAuley, from 243 Steele Road, approximately point
20 67 acres of land and to receive, from the McAuley to
21 243 Steele Road, approximately one half acre of land.

22 Separately, you'll receive, this
23 evening, an application on behalf of 243 Steele Road to
24 construct a new 18-unit building on the 243 Steele Road
25 property. That building would be proposed to be

1 located about 450 feet from Steele Road along the north
2 property line of 243 Steele Road and the common
3 property line with McAuley. No portion of that
4 proposed building would be situated on land the 243
5 Steele Road could receive from the McAuley. That land
6 would be used exclusively as open space, as a setback,
7 and as a landscape buffer.

8 The McAuley is aware that we have
9 this application that we filed for your consideration
10 for the 18-unit building, but they're desirous of
11 securing an approval for the lot line modification, and
12 they didn't want the applications confused, so if, for
13 any reason, the 18-unit building was not approved, they
14 still wanted the ability to have the lot line
15 modification effectuated.

16 So a town staff has reviewed the lot
17 line modification, and they approved it, and if you
18 were to concur in that outcome, it would also require a
19 rezoning of the swapped land. So the land that's being
20 conveyed from 243 to the McAuley would have to be
21 rezoned from SDD 139 to SDD 33, and the land that 243
22 Steele Road would receive from the McAuley would have
23 to be rezoned from SDD 33 to SDD 139.

24 So, just to summarize, the driveway
25 for the McAuley is located on the 243 land. We would

1 like to rectify that situation, and we can talk about
2 history of that, if anybody wants to know, but, in any
3 event, to rectify it, we would convey land to them, we
4 would receive land back that would enable us with our
5 new proposal, which is not under consideration now, to
6 meet the setback, landscape, buffer, open space
7 requirements of the regulations.

8 And that concludes my remarks. I'd
9 be happy to answer any questions.

10 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Mr.
11 Seiger. Before we go to council, I would like to see
12 if there's any public comment, and then while you are
13 checking, Mr. Dodge, were there any comments that were
14 written and e-mailed to you, Madam Clerk?

15 MS. LABROT: No.

16 MAYOR CANTOR: We received no public
17 comments via e-mail. Is there any public -- so nobody
18 signed up to make any public comments, so now we can go
19 to questions from the council. Are there any council
20 questions for Mr. Seiger? Mr. Davidoff?

21 MR. DAVIDOFF: Thank you, Madam
22 Mayor. This is the last public hearing that I'll be
23 sitting on.

24 MR. SEIGER: I saw that in the
25 paper.

1 MR. DAVIDOFF: Of course, no public
2 hearing would be complete without a question and/or a
3 comment.

4 I think it makes a lot of sense to
5 convey the property with the easement to McAuley. It
6 makes a lot of sense. I won't comment on the
7 application that's going to come before the council,
8 because that would be inappropriate, but I do want to
9 say that since we first met back -- way back, and we
10 were here until almost 3 o'clock in the morning, the
11 concerns of the people that spoke in opposition to this
12 application initially were never proven to be correct.
13 This particular development has not generated the
14 traffic that we heard speaker after speaker voice, and
15 I have several friends that live at this development,
16 and they're quite pleased with the quality and the
17 amenities that are offered. So you definitely, at the
18 time and currently, have met a need to have West
19 Hartford residents who have downsized and moved into
20 this particular development, and I thank you for making
21 that significant and prudent investment in the
22 community and wish you well on your future endeavors.

23 MR. SEIGER: It's been one of the
24 extraordinary privileges of my career, and we'll take
25 credit for the execution. We all worked very hard on

1 it together. I think it was more than one night. But,
2 yeah, I mean, working with this council, working with
3 DRAC, working with the building department, planning
4 department, the iterative process that we went through,
5 and it, you know, took courage; right? It wasn't an
6 easy approval. And I think that we stood the test of
7 time so far, but I'm mindful of the admonition of some
8 of the neighbors that we need to stand the test of time
9 for the duration, and that's our objective.

10 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Mr.
11 Seiger. Thank you, Mr. Davidoff. Are there any other
12 comments from council members?

13 Mr. Davidoff and I were both here,
14 and I will tell you I actually was talking to a
15 neighbor in the neighborhood, Governor's Square, and
16 who was adamantly opposed to the project. And she told
17 me numerous times, but reiterated the fact that how
18 grateful she is for the terrific partnership, the
19 neighbors are -- you, as a property owner, are so
20 meticulous and the care for the property is really
21 evident and how well run it is, and the pride you take
22 in being an owner there is -- really makes all of our
23 lives much better. So we are grateful for your
24 investment in West Hartford, your leadership, because I
25 think you paved the way in showing that multifamily

1 housing and single family housing can live very well
2 together.

3 MR. SEIGER: I appreciate the kind
4 words, Mayor Cantor. I want to be very careful not to
5 take too much credit, because it's really not due. It
6 was very much a group effort, and it still is to this
7 day; the women and men that make that work, that
8 incredible neighborhood, and the town. I mean, it's
9 just -- as I said, it's been a real privilege.

10 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you so much.
11 While you're here and before we close, I need to
12 reconvene for the record that we're closing the public
13 hearing.

14 Can you speak about the occupancy and
15 what is going on with your --

16 MR. SEIGER: Would you mind terribly
17 if I reserve that until --

18 MAYOR CANTOR: That would be -- yes.

19 MR. SEIGER: That was my intention,
20 to give you demographics and to kind of walk you
21 through what we had projected and what occurred.

22 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you. So any
23 other questions from the council?

24 So I will read into the record a
25 letter dated February 9, 2023 from Town Planning and

1 **Zoning Commission recommending approval, letter dated**
2 **February 24, 2023 from Design Review Advisory Committee**
3 **recommending approval, and we will close the public**
4 **hearing, and I thank you so much.**

5 **(Whereupon, the Public Hearing was**
6 **adjourned at 7:15 p.m.)**

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, DEBRA A. CHASSE, Court Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of Connecticut, duly commissioned and qualified, do hereby certify that the foregoing 11 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the Public Hearing held before the West Hartford Town Council.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my notarial seal this 16th day of March, 2023.



**Debra A. Chasse, CSR
Notary Public
State of Connecticut**

**My Commission Expires:
June 30, 2026
CSR No. 00055**