

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

**CERTIFIED
COPY**

TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

JUNE 13, 2023, 7:16 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS

**Re: Ordinance Amending Certain Requirements for
Accessory Dwelling Units**

DEBRA A. CHASSE, CSR #00055

APPEARANCES:

Town Council Members Present:

SHARI CANTOR, MAYOR

LIAM SWEENEY, DEPUTY MAYOR

CAROL BLANKS

ALBERTO CORTES

DEBRA POLUN

MARY FAY

ALSO PRESENT:

RICK LEDWITH, TOWN MANAGER

LEON DAVIDOFF, TOWN CLERK/COUNCIL CLERK

DALLAS DODGE, CORPORATION COUNSEL

1 MAYOR CANTOR: We will begin the
2 hearing for Ordinance Amending Certain Requirements for
3 Accessory Dwelling Units. Role call, Mr. Davidoff.

4 MR. DAVIDOFF: Thank you, Madam
5 Mayor. Councilor Blanks.

6 MS. BLANKS: Present.

7 MR. DAVIDOFF: Mayor Cantor.

8 MAYOR CANTOR: Here.

9 MR. DAVIDOFF: Councilor Cortes.

10 MR. CORTES: Here.

11 MR. DAVIDOFF: Councilor Fay.

12 MS. FAY: Present.

13 MR. DAVIDOFF: Councilor McGinnis.
14 Councilor Polun.

15 MS. POLUN: Here.

16 MR. DAVIDOFF: Deputy Mayor Sweeney.

17 MR. SWEENEY: Here.

18 MR. DAVIDOFF: Councilor Wenograd.
19 Councilor Zydanowicz. Six councilors present.

20 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Mr.
21 Davidoff. I will turn it over to the town manager, Mr.
22 Ledwith.

23 MR. LEDWITH: I will turn it over to
24 Todd Dumais to speak to this ordinance.

25 MR. DUMAIS: Thank you, Mr. Ledwith.

1 Madam Mayor, members of the council, Todd Dumais, town
2 planner, for the record.

3 Again, another ordinance correcting
4 our current ordinance to make sure we're consistent
5 with the state statute. In this instance the state
6 adopted a provision requiring municipalities, unless
7 they opted out, to adopt accessory dwelling unit
8 language, more or less based on the model that the
9 council adopted about a year before the state. Our
10 local ordinance was used, in large part, to develop the
11 state standard. As you can imagine, West Hartford does
12 not represent everywhere in the state, so the state, as
13 they adopted that language, did make some
14 modifications, and we're here tonight just to correct
15 the inconsistencies between the two.

16 And it's really around three or four
17 standards, the first of which our local ordinance set a
18 maximum square footage of an accessory dwelling unit at
19 800 square feet. The state standard is 1,000, so we
20 have to allow larger accessory dwelling units. The
21 next two standards were based upon provisions where we
22 could not impose or require a more restrictive setbacks
23 or coverage standards than the underlying zone that
24 applied to the main house required, so the two changes
25 there were, one, stating that we can require more

1 excessive coverage or more excessive side yard or front
2 yard or rear yard setback requirement.

3 And the last change of note was we
4 had a provision that allowed or required exterior
5 access to the dwelling units, and this is also not
6 allowed unless it's otherwise required by state, fire,
7 or building code. So we eliminated that provision and,
8 with those, we are in alignment in consistency with the
9 state statute.

10 The council was forward thinking and
11 adopted this ordinance in 2021 in January. We've had
12 seven accessory dwelling units approved since that
13 time. Of those seven, I went back and looked. One of
14 them could have utilized the provisions that this
15 ordinance has been in place. That was really
16 pertaining to exterior door and access to the unit.
17 The rest of them may have taken advantage of it, if
18 they wanted to build a larger accessory dwelling unit.
19 I don't know. We only had one unit approach the 800
20 square foot maximum.

21 It's a fairly straightforward
22 application. I'm happy to answer any questions that
23 council members may have.

24 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Mr.
25 Dumais. I just want to take a moment to thank you for

1 your work on all of these components and these
2 hearings. I appreciate your work, and you did a
3 wonderful job with our accessory dwelling. And, again,
4 I want to give a shout out to Counselor Wenograd who
5 was really instrumental in bringing us across the
6 finish line and making us be a leader for the state in
7 this.

8 So do we have any public comments?
9 And, Mr. Clerk, have we received any written comments
10 on this?

11 MR. DAVIDOFF: Madam Mayor, no
12 written comments.

13 MAYOR CANTOR: There is no one
14 signed up to speak. Is there anyone who would like to
15 speak to this public hearing? Then we will go to
16 questions from the council. Any comments? Miss Fay.

17 MS. FAY: Thank you, Mayor. The way
18 I understood the parking situation amendment that you
19 want to make to the resolution that is the state
20 mandate. Do I have that part right? That the state is
21 making us do that, once we opt out, through a laborious
22 process like more hearings, etc.? Okay. Is this one,
23 as well, or are we just looking to be more consistent
24 with what the state's guidelines were, or is the state
25 mandating that we do these changes? Thank you.

1 MAYOR CANTOR: Mr. Dumais or Mr.
2 Dodge.

3 MR. DODGE: Under the state statute
4 which, again, was all part of the same public act that
5 established both of those standards, there was an opt
6 out provision included. It would have been the same
7 process. Noticing, having a public hearing, stating
8 the reasons on the record for why we were opting out of
9 it.

10 MS. FAY: Thank you. Just a quick
11 followup. With the max changing from 800 to 1,000,
12 it's the greater of 30 percent or these. Is that
13 right? Wasn't it 30 percent of the houses would be an
14 ADU up to 800?

15 MR. DUMAIS: That's correct.

16 MS. FAY: It's still 30 percent,
17 though; right?

18 MR. DUMAIS: Yes.

19 MS. FAY: Okay. Thank you so much.

20 MAYOR CANTOR: Anything else? Okay.
21 Well, I want to read into the record a letter dated
22 June 9, 2023, from Town Planning & Zoning Commission
23 recommending approval; letter dated June 12, 2023 from
24 Capitol Region Council for Governments finding no
25 apparent conflict with regional plans, policies, or

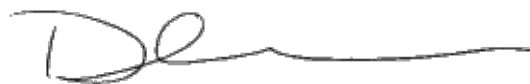
1 concerns of neighboring towns. One more check. All
2 right. Again, thank you very much, Mr. Dumais. With
3 that, we are adjourned for this public hearing.

4 (Whereupon, the hearing was
5 adjourned at 7:21 p.m.)
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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 8 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 28th day of June, 2023.



Debra A. Chasse, CSR
Notary Public
State of Connecticut

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