

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

**CERTIFIED
COPY**

TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

JUNE 13, 2023, 6:47 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS

**Re: Ordinance Establishing a Sustainable West
Hartford Commission and Ordinance Repealing
The Ordinance Establishing the Conservation
and Environment Commission**

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: And we are two
2 minutes in to the 6:45. We will begin the 6:45 public
3 hearing, Ordinance Establishing a Sustainable West
4 Hartford Commission and Ordinance Repealing the
5 Ordinance Establishing the Conservation and Environment
6 Commission. We'll begin with role call.

7 MR. DAVIDOFF: Thank you, Madam
8 Mayor. Councilor Blanks.

9 MS. BLANKS: Present.

10 MR. DAVIDOFF: Mayor Cantor.

11 MAYOR CANTOR: Here.

12 MR. DAVIDOFF: Councilor Cortes.

13 MR. CORTES: Here.

14 MR. DAVIDOFF: Councilor Fay.

15 MS. FAY: Present.

16 MR. DAVIDOFF: Councilor McGinnis.
17 Councilor Polun.

18 MS. POLUN: Here.

19 MR. DAVIDOFF: Deputy Mayor Sweeney.

20 MR. SWEENEY: Here.

21 MR. DAVIDOFF: Councilor Wenograd.
22 Councilor Zydanowicz. Six councilors present.

23 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Mr.
24 Davidoff. We'll begin with a presentation by the town
25 manager.

1 MR. LEDWITH: The purpose of this
2 public hearing is to formally create a new sustainable
3 West Hartford Commission. The council may recall that
4 the idea of combining the Clean Energy Commission and
5 the Conservation and Environment Commission first came
6 up with a recommendation from the Sustainability
7 Advisory Group back in March of 2022.

8 As a result of those
9 recommendations, our energy specialist, Catherine
10 Diviney, kicked off a series of meetings that started
11 last June of 2022 to bring together both commissions
12 with the idea of working together as a combined group
13 that would be committed to promoting greater
14 sustainability in West Hartford.

15 The groups met monthly to develop
16 and refine the ordinance that is before you as the
17 final review completed by our corporation counsel's
18 office back in April. This ordinance was presented at
19 the Public Works Facilities and Sustainable Committee
20 meeting in May where it was recommended to move forward
21 to the council this evening.

22 The new sustainable West Hartford
23 Commission will be comprised of 11 electors of the town
24 for the purpose of promoting practices that lead to
25 greater environmental, social, and economic

1 sustainability ensuring a high quality of life for
2 present and future generations for fostering an
3 inclusive, resilient, and thriving community and
4 encouraging the responsible use and conservation of
5 energy and natural resources.

6 Eligible members shall have interest
7 or experience in the field of environmental, social, or
8 economic sustainability. This particular ordinance
9 will take effect September 1st of 2023.

10 I do want to thank members of our
11 staff, Catherine Diviney and Cynthia Lauture, as well
12 as Bernie Pelletier, who chaired the Clean Energy
13 Commission, and Emilee Mooney Scott, who chaired the
14 Conservation Environment Commission, as well as all the
15 members of both those commissions who worked hard over
16 the last year to bring us where we are this evening
17 establishing this new sustainable West Hartford
18 Commission.

19 I will pause there and turn it back
20 to you, Madam Mayor, for any questions that the council
21 has.

22 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Mr.
23 Ledwith. Are there any questions? We'll start with
24 public comment, Mr. Dodge. I would assume -- while Mr.
25 Dodge is checking, Mr. Clerk, have you had any -- have

1 you received any comments?

2 MR. DAVIDOFF: No, Madam Mayor.

3 MAYOR CANTOR: There's no one signed
4 up. Is there anyone here that would like to speak to
5 this public hearing. No? Okay. So questions or
6 comments from town council?

7 Well, I just want to say that it's
8 unfortunate that Mr. Wenograd couldn't be here for this
9 meeting and this public hearing. He's traveling, but
10 he has -- this was under his committee and he's very
11 supportive of this idea. This is something, actually,
12 that we had talked about prior to the pandemic and it's
13 a model that has worked in many other communities,
14 bringing together one group to have the focus of
15 environmental, economic, and social sustainability and
16 the impact of that, and sustainable Connecticut has
17 kind of used that format for their rewards program, and
18 this is something that actually will be recognized by
19 the state and keep us in that top category. I also
20 want to thank Catherine Diviney for her work and
21 leadership on this. This is something that we knew
22 about when we established the Sustainability Advisory
23 Group, that we would probably be in this position, and
24 I want to thank all the members of the Conservation and
25 Clean Energy for their collaboration and support in

1 combining the Clean Sustainability Commission.

2 So, with that, any other comments
3 or -- Miss Blanks?

4 MS. BLANKS: Thank you, Madam Mayor.
5 I would just echo what you just said. I do know the
6 committee, as well as Catherine Diviney and her team,
7 and the volunteers have worked very hard to the point
8 where we are now, and it shows the commitment on the
9 town, as well as that there's a body to put our money
10 where our mouth is and to be a leader in this
11 particular area. So I, too, want to thank everybody
12 who put their time and effort in seeing this through.

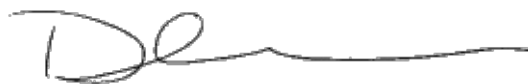
13 MAYOR CANTOR: Thank you, Miss
14 Blanks. Seeing no other comments, questions, we will
15 adjourn this public hearing and the next public hearing
16 is scheduled to begin at 7, so we have 7 minutes or so.

17 (Whereupon, the Hearing adjourned at
18 6:52 p.m.)
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

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 7 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