

**MINUTES OF WEST HARTFORD PUBLIC HEARING  
JUNE 25, 2013 - LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER  
ORDINANCE DESIGNATING THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS TO SERVE  
AS THE HOUSING CODE APPEALS BOARD**

Public Hearing called to order at 7:04 p.m.

President Slifka: Roll call please, Ms. Labrot.

Present were Councilors Adler, Davidoff, Doar, Hall, Kindall, and Slifka. Councilors Cantor, Captain, and Casperson were absent.

President Slifka: With a skeleton crew this evening, and I think it is all because they saw that Mr. Alair was going to speak. We kid cause we love. So I guess, Mr. Alair, because you are already at the podium, you are making the presentation for the administration.

Mr. Alair: I don't think I qualify as part of any skeleton crew. Yes, the purpose of the ordinance is actually very simple. In the roughly 26 years I have been here, I think we've had one or two appeals to the Housing Code Board of Appeals. It has a very narrow scope of review. As a result of that, it is hard to get people to sit on it and it is hard to keep track of the people who sit on it once they're here. They move out of town before they are ever called upon to serve. It dawned on us that the Zoning Board of Appeals serves a parallel function for appeals of decisions of the zoning official and they meet regularly on a monthly basis, so for the once or twice every decade or once every decade that you might actually need the Housing Code Board of Appeals, designating the ZBA to serve that function would eliminate a separate standing board and, and give it to the hands of a board that deals with things like that and is having regular meetings, simple as that.

President Slifka: All right, thank you. Are there are any questions from members of the council at this point? Oh, I'm sorry, go ahead Ms. Hall.

Councilor Hall: Thank you. I was just wondering whether we've had any inquiries from any of the people that are currently serving on the Housing Code Appeals Board? I see from last time someone was appointed, looks like it was in 2005 was the most recent one, so, but I know that they serve until they're replaced. So, any discussions or do we send letters to everyone, if, assuming this passes?

Mr. Alair: Assuming this passes, we will certainly send letters to their last known addresses, letting them know that their service has been appreciated but this is what the council has decided to do. We had an incident last year where someone tried to appeal to the Housing Code Board of Appeals and in conversations with Steve Huleatt, because his department, they're basically appealing orders that all come from the Health District so he knows who those folks are. He couldn't find any of them, so I don't know if it was a matter of aggressively looking for them or if it was just a matter of he knew there were

one or two around, but we didn't have enough to be a quorum anyway. And by the way, that matter was resolved administratively, we dealt with it without the need for an appeal, which is sort of what we've had to do in the absence of a fully functioning board. I should tell you, by the way, that the ZBA has reviewed this and they are perfectly happy taking on this burden.

President Slifka: I did get, I know the question was directed to me, but I did hear from one member of the group who sort of said, I think, it came about when we were appointing him to something else because he was now freed up from this and he described his stepping down from this as reluctant, which I said oh, oh that's, that's nice, but he must be doing a lot, he must value the work and then I found out he maybe had one meeting in like a ten-year period, so I appreciate the sentiment but it doesn't look like we were working everybody too hard.

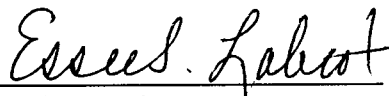
Mr. Alair: I think he was perhaps reluctant to give up such a cushy assignment in favor of something....

President Slifka: Well, it comes with the usual West Hartford pay you know. Okay, anything else from the council? Anybody sign up, Mr. Alair?

Mr. Alair: No one.

President Slifka: Okay, um, I think I know why everybody in the audience is here on an individual basis but just to open it up, does anybody who did not sign up who wishes to speak to the subject matter of this public hearing? And if so, please just come to the mic. Okay, well then if there's nothing further from the administration or the council, I will close the 7:00 public hearing.

Public Hearing closed at 7:08 p.m.



Essie S. Labrot  
Town Clerk/Council Clerk

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**APPROVED AT JULY 23, 2013 TOWN COUNCIL MEETING**