

TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

TOWN COUNCIL, PUBLIC HEARING

November 27, 2012, 6:13 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE CHAMBERS

Re: Application on Behalf of West Hartford  
Housing Authority for Change of Zone from  
BN and R-6 to RM-1 and Thence to Special  
Development District Designation for  
Property Known as 189 and 203 Newington  
Road to Construct 47 Dwelling Units,  
Including 32 Market Rate and 15 Workforce  
Units, on Approximately 1.59 Acres and  
Request for a Waiver of Application Fees as  
Applicant is a Non-profit Organization  
Providing Need Lower Income and Market Rate  
Housing for the Town.

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TOWN COUNCIL OFFICE  
WEST HARTFORD, CT



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

2 Town Council Members Present:

3 SHARI CANTOR, Vice President

4 STEVEN I. ADLER

5 HARRY J. CAPTAIN

6 JUDY L. CASPERSON

7 LEON DAVIDOFF

8 DENISE B. HALL

9 CLARE KINDALL

10

11 Alternates:

12 BRIAN COATES

13 BERNARD KAVALER

14

15 RONALD VAN WINKLE,

16 Town Manager

17

18 JOSEPH A. O'BRIEN,

19 Corporation Counsel

20

21 PATRICK ALAIR,

22 Deputy Corporation Counsel

23

24 ESSIE S. LABROT,

25 Town Clerk/Council Clerk

1 A p p e a r a n c e s (Cont'd):

2 For the Applicant:

3 LEVY & DRONEY, P.C.

4 Pondview Corporate Center

5 74 Batterson Park Road

6 Farmington, Connecticut 06032

7 (860) 676-3000

8 By: DANIEL E. KLEINMAN, ESQ.

9

10 GEORGE HOWELL  
11 West Hartford Housing Authority

12 THOMAS ARCARI  
13 KEVIN McFARLAND  
14 Quisenberry Arcari Architects, LLC

15 DIAN BARNES  
16 Dian Barnes Landscape Design, LLC

17 STEPHEN ULMAN  
18 Alfred Benesch & Company

19 OZZIE TORRES  
20 Torres Engineering

21 ROBERT J. MULREADY  
22 JF Mulready Co, LLC.

23

24

25

1 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.  
2 Good evening. Welcome back on this cold,  
3 almost winter night.

4 We are going to open the  
5 public hearing. This is for the Application  
6 on Behalf of West Hartford Housing Authority  
7 for a Change of Zone from BN and R-6 to RM-1  
8 and Thence to Special Development District  
9 Designation for Property Known as 189-203  
10 Newington Road to Construct 47 Dwelling Units  
11 Including 32 Market Rate and 15 Workforce  
12 Units on Approximately 1.59 Acres; a Request  
13 for a Waiver of Application Fee as Applicant  
14 is a Nonprofit Organization Providing Needed  
15 Lower-Income and Market-Rates Housing for the  
16 Town.

17 I move that we have a roll  
18 call vote.

19 MS. LABROT: Mr. Adler.

20 COUNCILOR ADLER: Not a vote.

21 COUNCILOR KINDALL: Roll call.

22 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Right.

23 I'm sorry. I move that we --

24 COUNCILOR ADLER: Unless you  
25 want to vote now.

1 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Roll  
2 call.

3 COUNCILOR ADLER: Here.

4 MS. LABROT: Mrs. Cantor.

5 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Here.

6 MS. LABROT: Mr. Captain.

7 COUNCILOR CAPTAIN: Here.

8 MS. LABROT: Mrs. Casperson.

9 COUNCILOR CASPERSON: Here.

10 MS. LABROT: Mr. Davidoff.

11 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Here.

12 MS. LABROT: Mr. Coates for

13 Mr. Doar.

14 MR. COATES: Here.

15 MS. LABROT: Mrs. Hall.

16 COUNCILOR HALL: Here.

17 MS. LABROT: Ms. Kindall.

18 COUNCILOR KINDALL: Here.

19 MS. LABROT: And Mr. Kavalier

20 for Mr. Slifka.

21 MR. KAVALER: Here.

22 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank  
23 you.

24 We had -- this is a little  
25 unique situation. We had a public hearing

1 last time and we had one public hearing right  
2 after the other. This one actually had a  
3 public comment and the public comment ran  
4 rather long and we were asked to, by the  
5 Applicant, to continue the -- actually by our  
6 Council Members and the Applicant in the  
7 other public hearing also wanted to be -- to  
8 be heard.

9 So we continued the public  
10 hearing. We had unofficially closed the --  
11 there's no really official way, it's really  
12 up to us -- to close the public comment  
13 section of -- for the public hearing, but we  
14 are just going to have Mr. O'Brien go through  
15 what happened and what are our options are.

16 MR. O'BRIEN: Yes, when we had  
17 our first public hearing on this matter you  
18 listen to to the presentation of the  
19 Applicant, and then rather than have the  
20 Council Members ask questions of the  
21 Applicant you went to the public portion of  
22 the hearing and listened to testimony from  
23 the public. And then that concluded.

24 And then you adjourned the  
25 public hearing until tonight to continue with

1 questions from the Council to the applicant.

2 Now it's a hundred percent at  
3 your discretion if you wish to, you know,  
4 allow more public comment, certainly like the  
5 people who have not spoken or that sort of  
6 thing. It's completely up to you, even from  
7 people who have already spoken. You have  
8 complete discretion to reopen the public  
9 portion and hear more testimony from the  
10 public. You can do that before or after the  
11 Council asks its questions of the Applicant.  
12 Again, that's your choice.

13 And then at the end, the  
14 applicant would have a rebuttal or summation  
15 period at the very end. So they -- they  
16 would actually have the last word. That's  
17 how our procedure runs with in these things.

18 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank  
19 you.

20 Can I just see a show of hands  
21 of people who have not spoken at the previous  
22 hearing you would like to speak again? Is  
23 there any interest?

24 Okay. All right. So we will  
25 offer that, and I -- I just would

1 appreciate -- last time we got a little  
2 lively, and heated, and I would appreciate  
3 decorum and respect for all speakers, no  
4 matter what your position is.

5 So if you have, you know, if  
6 you want to come out and speak please make  
7 sure you come up to state your name and your  
8 address. And again, if you spoke last time,  
9 please -- please, we would respect that you  
10 have shared your views with us and -- and,  
11 so, okay.

12 So is there -- I saw a hand  
13 over here? I saw an individual over here.  
14 No? Nobody?

15 A VOICE: He's coming.

16 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Oh,  
17 okay.

18 I'm sorry, sir. In the  
19 middle, right there, the public forum, the  
20 podium. Thank you.

21 LEONARD SMITH: Thank you.  
22 Actually I already sent a letter to the Town  
23 Clerk -- I'm Lawrence Smith -- which you  
24 probably -- I hope you've all read.

25 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: We



1 have.

2  
3 LEONARD SMITH: And to be  
4 honest, I mist just leave it at that because  
5 what I wanted to say was basically there. I  
6 just wanted to make sure you have it.

7 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank  
8 you. We do. We have all the correspondence  
9 that was e-mailed to us through the Town  
10 Clerk.

11 Thank you very much.

12 Anybody else?

13 Thank you.

14 SHELDON WATSON: Good evening.

15 Thank you for the opportunity  
16 to speak tonight. First off, my name is  
17 Dr. Sheldon Watson. I live at 91 Elmfield  
18 Street in the Elmwood section of West  
19 Hartford.

20 I want to speak to you tonight  
21 from three different perspectives. One a  
22 professional perspective. I'm a professor of  
23 educational leadership at Central Connecticut  
24 State University. Secondly, I'm a resident  
25 and property owner in the area. And thirdly,  
I'm a father.

1           First -- and I'm going to  
2 refer to some notes here -- I'd like to speak  
3 as a professional. As a professor, I also  
4 have additional expertise in the area of  
5 program evaluation. In the past I've done  
6 research in support of program evaluation on  
7 nonprofit organizations. In fact, I  
8 partnered with the New Britain Housing  
9 Authority in looking at the development of  
10 public housing in New Britain.

11           In the course of my research,  
12 I looked at decades of work on public housing  
13 across the country, specifically since the  
14 reforms to urban development which took place  
15 in the early Clinton administration. One  
16 thing that's clear from the evidence is that  
17 the introduction of mixed-market public  
18 housing into neighborhoods does not, in and  
19 of itself, necessarily affect property values  
20 in terms of lowering them, nor does it  
21 introduce risk -- risk factors to a  
22 community.

23           What we've seen historically  
24 with public housing is that public housing  
25 efforts have failed when we have introduced

1 public housing into neighborhoods that  
2 already have significant risk factors.  
3 Public housing, in and of itself, does not  
4 introduce risk factors.

5           From this perspective, a  
6 professional one, I support these types of  
7 development. We've seen many instances  
8 around the country where such types of  
9 efforts have led to economic development and  
10 actual increases in property values in  
11 communities.

12           Secondly, and most  
13 importantly, as a resident and as a father, I  
14 find West Hartford to be a very special  
15 community. I think we have a lot to offer.  
16 Many people want to come to our community and  
17 benefit from what we have, particularly our  
18 schools, our culture. I did this myself. I  
19 think that we should hold ourselves to very  
20 high ideals, not sacrifice those ideals  
21 because of myths and misperceptions of what  
22 certain types of developments can bring to a  
23 neighborhood.

24           I, for one, support the zone  
25 change, welcome this type of development in

1 my community. I live only blocks from the  
2 proposed development. I welcome the zone  
3 change, extend my hand. My family extends  
4 their hands and welcome to families that  
5 would want to live in such a development, and  
6 I encourage you to support this measure.

7 Thank you.

8 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank  
9 you.

10 Okay. So I think we are going  
11 to have a -- oh, I'm sorry. Come on up.

12 PATRICIA J. LOWRY: My name is  
13 Patty J. Lowry. I live at 24 Grove. And I  
14 wasn't -- I didn't know we were going to be  
15 able to speak tonight, so I didn't prepare of  
16 anything.

17 Elmwood already has their fair  
18 share of affordable housing. We have plenty  
19 of it below the overpass. There's plenty of,  
20 you know, three-bedroom units. That's West  
21 Hartford. People think of it -- can think it  
22 as Hartford, but we already have our fair  
23 share. We don't need more. If we need more  
24 housing, mixed-income workforce -- that's the  
25 new term, a/k/a affordable housing,

1 low-income housing, put it in other areas of  
2 West Hartford.

3 We already have diverse  
4 schools. Okay. We build these magnet  
5 schools to bring people from those  
6 neighborhoods to our neighborhoods because  
7 we're already diverse. Bring the housing and  
8 the other neighborhoods. Stop trying to  
9 bring those people to ours. Bring the people  
10 to them. We have our fair share. This is  
11 not good for Elmwood.

12 Thank you.

13 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank  
14 you.

15 (Applause.)

16 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.  
17 Anybody else?

18 A VOICE: About two more.

19 VICE PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay.  
20 Thank you.

21 ASHLEY THEROUX-HUI: Hi, my  
22 name is Ashley Theroux-Hui. I live at 35  
23 Princeton Street.

24 I just heard about this really  
25 recently, and I drive by the area all the

