

**East Hartford Planning & Zoning Commission and Town Council Joint
Special Meeting**

March 22nd, 2023

A Special Meeting of the **EAST HARTFORD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION
AND TOWN COUNCIL** was held at the East Hartford Cultural Community Center, Room 111,
50 Chapman Pl, East Hartford, Connecticut on March 22nd, 2023

CALL TO ORDER

Town Council Chairman Kehoe called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm

Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman Ryan began the meeting concurrently

ROLL CALL

PZC Commissioners Present:

Chairman John Ryan

Vice Chairman Pawlowski (remote)

Commissioner Noel, Secretary

Commissioner Soderholm

Commissioner Povinelli,

Commissioner Marra

Town Councilors Present:

Chairman Richard F. Kehoe,

Vice Chairman Donald Bell, Jr.,

Majority Leader, Sebrina Wilson (via Teams, arrived in person 6:48 pm)

Minority Leader John Morrison

Angela Parkinson

Harry O. Amadasun, Jr. (via Teams, arrived in person 6:48 pm)

Awet Tsegai (via Teams, arrived in person 6:48 pm)

Thomas Rup

Travis Simpson

Planning Staff Present:

Development Director Eileen Buckheit

Town Planner Carlene Shaw

Interim Town Planner Steve Hnatuk

SPECIAL MEETING

Presentation of the East Hartford Draft Affordable Housing Plan by Tyche Planning and Policy

Josh Guszkowski from Tyche Planning and Policy Group, the hired consultant for this plan, gave a presentation summarizing the Draft East Hartford Affordable Housing Plan:

Major Speaking Points:

- The most recent affordable housing plan completed by the Town was done in 2017. According to State of Connecticut requirements, every municipality must complete an affordable housing plan every five years. East Hartford is past due, but the Town has submitted the proper paperwork for an extension to this requirement.
- The Plan has to specify how the municipality intends to increase the number of affordable housing developments, as required by State Statute.
- Every municipality needs to have minimum 10% affordable housing. East Hartford has about 15% currently.
- Mr. Guszkowski went over the difference between Capital-A and small-a affordable housing (i.e. Section 8 and government assisted housing vs mixed housing types like accessory dwelling units and small apartment units)
- The average household size in East Hartford has been declining- currently at 2.62
- Data project slow population growth in the near future
- Just over half of all housing is single family homes
- Rough 60/40 owner vs. renter occupied ratio
- The housing stock in East Hartford is aging. A large portion of the homes were built between the 50s to the 70s
- There has been a decrease in the number of building permits since the mid-2000s
- Almost half of affordable housing in East Hartford is government assisted

- There are still concerns with cost burdened households in East Hartford- 45% of people in the Town pay more than 30% of their income on housing. 56% of renters are cost burned.
- 52% of all households are considered low income

Concerns from Town Council:

Members of Town Council shared that they want to see more data comparing the state as a whole and some issues cannot be solved via housing because they are more systemic and generational. They added that East Hartford has been taking on a higher burden of low income housing than other towns in the region, that is why low income individuals are moving to the Town. They would like to see more emphasis on the work we have already done and highlight the positives. They think the survey that was sent out included questions that were too generic and should focus on what types of housing the residents would like to see.

Mr. Guskowski then went over the **Recommended Actions** included in the Plan.

Recommended Actions:

- Improve access to information for residents
- Promote homeownership funding programs
- Develop affordable housing in surplus, unrestricted, and town owned land
- Incentivize low income housing tax credits
- Access to homeowner grants and housing trust funds for housing repairs for cost burdened households
- Promote energy efficiency and tax deferral programs
- Create a Town-wide housing assessment deferral program
- Incentives for production of affordable units
- Renovate and construct higher quality homes
- Increase viability for multi-family development in business zones
- Create an incentive affordable housing overlay zone
- Support the expansion of public transportation
- Expand housing opportunities for senior citizens

Mr. Guskowski then shared that there is an **Implementation Guide** section at the end of the Plan, which includes bite-size step by step guidance for how to achieve the above-mentioned goals.

Chairman Kehoe mentioned that Foreclosure and Eviction Data should be included in the Plan.

Development Director Buckheit mentioned to keep in mind that the POCD rewrite is coming up within the next few months and that the Planning Commissioners and the Town Councilors should be involved in the public outreach process. There will be many opportunities for public input.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Kehoe asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilor Morrison made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30. Councilor Bell seconded. All in favor.

Commissioner Noel additionally made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Soderholm seconded. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Carlene Shaw

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Town Planner

John Ryan, Planning & Zoning Commission Chairman

Date