C.H.E.S.S. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING, EDUCATION, SOCIAL SERVICES, STATE & COMMERCE

Maureen Pollack, Co-Chair Stephanie Sylvestre, Co-Chair

Committee Minutes

Date: Tuesday, October 20, 2026
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Place: This meeting was held in the Democratic Caucus Room and on Zoom.

The CHESS Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Co-Chairs Pollack and Sylvestre, and Committee Member Reps. Goldberg, Gross, McKeown, Price, Walston, and Wirz. Rep. Yaeger was excused. Also in attendance were Reps. Camporeale, Hill, Hughes, Hyatt, Pelliccia, Shaw and Weinberg; Ralph Blessing, Land Use Bureau Chief; and Emily Gordon, Director of Housing and Community Dev.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. CHESS32.024	**ORDINANCE for public hearing and final adoption;** Amending Section 146 Article VI of the Code of Ordinances – Stamford Housing Affordable Trust Fund. 09/06/2026 – Submitted by Reps. Shaw, Hughes and Lapine 09/30/2026 – Amended by Committee 8-0-0 09/30/2026 – Approved as amended by Committee 7-0-1	**COMMITTEE APPROVED AS AMENDED 7-1-0**

Chair Pollack opened the public hearing at 6:30 p.m. Many members of the public spoke in opposition to this ordinance. Public comments focused on maintaining direct tenant representation on the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board, concerns about reducing the number of trustees, preserving transparency and Board of Representatives oversight over expenditures, and increasing the expenditure-review threshold from $100,000 to $1 million. A central concern repeatedly emphasized by members of the public was the importance of ensuring that individuals who actually reside in affordable housing have direct representation and a voice on the Board. Additional concerns raised included housing affordability, rents, maintenance conditions, displacement, and potential conflicts involving development or housing-management interests.

Chair Pollack closed the public hearing at 8:00 p.m. After a brief break the committee considered and discussed the proposed ordinance. The discussion addressed trustee composition, resident representation, qualifications for public trustees, quorum, oversight of expenditures and the proposed $1 million review threshold.

A motion was made to insert the following in Sec. 146-70. Affordable housing trustees. "Notwithstanding the foregoing, not less than one voting member and one alternative member of the Board shall be residents who currently reside in housing qualifying as affordable housing projects as defined in Section 146-66 herein. " Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 7-1-0. (Reps. Pollack, Sylvestre, Goldberg, Gross, McKeown, Price, and Wirz in favor; Rep. Walston opposed.)

A motion was made to strike the words “or have professional experience developing or managing housing projects” from Sec. 146-70, Affordable Housing Trustees. After discussion, the motion was amended to replace the proposed deletion with the following language: “or have professional experience in affordable housing public policy or the financing of housing projects.” Said motion, as amended, was seconded and approved by a vote of 7-0-1. (Reps. Pollack, Sylvestre, Goldberg, Gross, McKeown, Price, and Wirz in favor; Rep. Walston abstained.)

A motion was made to amend Sec. 146-75, Expenditures from Trust, by replacing the language in subsection C.2, “for authorized purposes as outlined in subsection 146-75.C.2,” with “in accordance with the Affordable Housing Plan, as defined in Section 146-74,” and correcting the reference in subsection C.3 from “Section 146-75.C.2” to “Section 146-74.” Said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 8-0-0. (Reps. Pollack, Sylvestre, Goldberg, Gross, McKeown, Price, Walston, and Wirz in favor.)

A motion was made to approve this item as amended, said motion was seconded and approved by a vote of 7-1-0. (Reps. Pollack, Sylvestre, Goldberg, Gross, McKeown, Price, and Wirz in favor; Rep. Walston opposed.)

2.	CHESS32.025	**REJECTION;** of an allocation of $1,500,000.00 to Southfield Village Limited Partnership (Beacon Communities LLC) to rehabilitate and preserve 315 units of Mixed Income Housing at Southwood Square Apartments. 09/17/2026 – Submitted by Ralph Blessing and Emily Gordon	**FAILED TO REJECT 0-8-0**

Rep. McKeown explained that, pursuant to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund Ordinance, funding recommendations exceeding the established threshold are submitted to the Board of Representatives, which has 45 days from receipt to reject the recommendation. He noted that the recommendation was received on or about September 17, 2026, making the deadline approximately November 2, 2026. Since the Board's next regular meeting was scheduled for November 4, 2026, due to the election, the Board would need to hold a special meeting before the deadline to consider rejecting the allocation. Otherwise, the recommendation would be deemed approved.

The Committee reviewed the proposed allocation of $1,500,000 to Southfield Village Limited Partnership for the rehabilitation and preservation of 315 mixed-income housing units at Southwood Square Apartments, including 233 affordable units. The project includes kitchen and bathroom renovations, energy efficiency improvements, and other capital repairs. Discussion included the project schedule, preservation of existing affordable units, and temporary relocation arrangements for residents during renovations.

A motion to reject this item failed by a vote of 0-8-0. (Reps. Pollack, Sylvestre, Goldberg, Gross, McKeown, Price, Walston, and Wirz opposed.)

Co-Chair Pollack adjourned the meeting at 10:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Maureen Pollack, Co-Chair

This meeting is on video Pt.1, Pt.2 and Pt.3