

CONNECTICUT  
Land Conservation Council

Comments on House Bill No. 5390  
Planning and Development Committee  
Submitted by Amy Blaymore Paterson, Executive Director  
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Co-Chairs Kavros-DeGraw and Rahman, Vice-Chairs Chafee and Needleman, Ranking Members Zullo and Fazio, and members of the Planning and Development Committee:

*The Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) is the state's umbrella organization for the land conservation community, including its ~120 land trusts. CLCC is a 501(c)(3) organization operating statewide. Our mission is to elevate and strengthen land conservation in Connecticut.*

Thank you for this opportunity to provide general comments regarding **House Bill No. 5390, An Act Concerning Transit-Oriented Communities**.

CLCC's goal is to safeguard our natural and working lands, prioritize the vital role of nature-based solutions in mitigating the escalating effects of the inter-related crises of climate change and biodiversity loss, and ensure that everyone everywhere has access to the benefits of nature. We also believe in the power of collaboration in addressing community needs.

CLCC's community-centered conservation programming brings together land trusts and other community groups, including housing organizations, to explore ways of increasing collaboration, advocating for mutually beneficial policies, and creating new funding sources for conservation and affordable housing. These conversations have served as an impetus for new community projects in which land trusts are playing a greater role in creating sustainable and affordable housing development.

To that end, with an overall focus on reducing sprawl, the bill includes measures to help address environmental concerns and avoid development-related impacts by: (1) formally involving the local inland wetlands and watercourse agency in determining the size and location of the transit-oriented district (including holding public hearings) and (2) exempting certain land uses, including FEMA hazard areas, public parks, and drinking water supply areas, from inclusion in the transit-oriented zone.

By adding these provisions, HB 5390 provides an opportunity for land trusts, municipal land use commissions, housing advocates, and other community groups to work together, rather than at odds, in determining where in the community affordable and sustainable housing is best suited for development.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our comments and for all you do. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

