



Connecticut Chapter
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May 7, 2026

Mithila Chakraborty, Ph.D.
Connecticut Department of Housing
505 Hudson Street
Hartford, CT 06106-7106
mithila.chakraborty@ct.gov

Dear Ms. Chakraborty,

On behalf of Sierra Club and our 30,000 members and supporters in Connecticut, thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and request a scoping hearing on the Mary Shepard Place project, as published in the May 5, 2026 Environmental Monitor.

The intersection between affordability, health, comfort, climate resilience and climate mitigation has never been more important. This project is an opportunity to improve access to affordable housing, lower energy burden, reduce indoor and outdoor air pollution and increase access to clean and renewable energy for the residents of Mary Shepard Place.

High-performance, energy efficient housing is the most cost effective and healthy choice for new buildings. They have lower lifetime costs, using significantly less energy than conventionally constructed buildings and by supplying their own renewable energy. Upfront costs will pay off over time, and will minimize the energy burden on residents as electric rates increase. We urge the highest efficiency standards for these new buildings, as well on-site solar, electric appliances, and heat pumps for heating and cooling. We believe that the project could be suitable for a thermal energy network/geothermal system, the most efficient type of heating and cooling system.

The health benefits of all-electric construction is important in Hartford, where poor air quality and high asthma rates are a serious concern for the community. The combustion of gas in buildings produces a range of air pollutants with both acute and chronic health effects. Health-related costs and high utility rates are some of the next highest expenditures for low-income individuals after rent/mortgage payments. Controlling these expenses with healthier buildings is an important component of maintaining affordability in Hartford, Connecticut.

We would welcome the opportunity at a scoping hearing to learn about the plans for energy efficiency, solar, electric appliances, and geothermal heating and cooling in the new buildings. We strongly support using a local workforce of Hartford residents in the design and construction, and would request information on the workforce for the project.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and our request for a scoping meeting.

Sincerely,

Alycia D. Jenkins, Organizer
Sierra Club Connecticut

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