

Memories of staying in New Haven, involvement in the city's government, being written about in the press, being on YouTube.

One recent article recalls a lot of this:

[https://www.newhavenindependent.org/article/ed\\_mattison](https://www.newhavenindependent.org/article/ed_mattison)

### **Term Limited, City Plan Veteran Mattison Moves On**

by THOMAS BREEN | May 26, 2022 1:44 pm



Ed Mattison (center) chairs a 2019 City Plan Commission meeting. THOMAS BREEN PHOTO

For the past 14 years, Ed Mattison has had as up-close of a view as anyone of New Haven's changing built environment — and has helped guide that development through countless volunteer hours spent trying to balance the strictures of land-use law with the real-world needs of people and neighborhoods.

It was a good run. Mattison announced Wednesday that, thanks to an obscure and sometimes overlooked city law, he'll be stepping down from his post on the City Plan Commission to make way for new voices to take the lead.

Mattison made that announcement at the end of Wednesday night's three-hour special meeting of the City Plan Commission, which took place online via Zoom.

He said that he just recently learned that New Haven has an ordinance, previously "unknown to me," that says that no one can serve on any city board of commission for more than nine years in a row.

"I have been a member of this commission for 14 years," he said, "and therefore I will have to resign my position as a member of this commission."

That same city law says that someone who has served on a commission for nine years straight can be reappointed to that body after taking a mandatory one-year

break. Mattison said that he's not yet sure if he'll try to get back on the City Plan Commission in a year's time.

"This has been an enormous piece of my life, which I have really loved," he said as he bid his commission colleagues farewell. "And, even though we'll continue to know each other, it will be really sad for me to not be on the commission, even if it is just for a year. I'll miss you all."

Mattison currently serves as the City Plan Commission's vice-chair. Before that, he was the local land-use commission's chair. Those posts in turn followed up on Mattison's already long career of public service in New Haven as a former city deputy corporation counsel, East Rock alder, and legal aid lawyer, among other roles.

During Mattison's tenure at or near the helm of the City Plan Commission, meanwhile, the board has emerged as one of the most demanding volunteer assignments in local government thanks to New Haven's decade-long building boom. Over the course of its monthly meetings — which regularly last four hours apiece, and sometimes take place more than once a month — the volunteer commissioners and city staff review technical site plan applications submitted by developers, debate zoning changes, hear hours upon hours of impassioned testimony from the public, architects, engineers, lawyers, and other experts, and generally get a first look at the city's ever-changing built environment.

On Wednesday night, Mattison's fellow commissioners praised him for his commitment to the body, and to the city.

"You've just been a steady rock for this commission," Commissioner Ernest Pagan said. "We appreciate your leadership and your consistency."

Westville Alder and City Plan Commissioner Adam Marchand said that, during his decade-long tenure on the commission, "I have served with Ed Mattison, and have learned a lot from him and with him. It's been a pleasure, sir." (Because Marchand is appointed to the commission by his fellow colleagues on the Board of Alders, he is not subject to the nine-year term limit that other mayoral-appointed commissioners are.)

"We will miss your thought and knowledge and consideration," said city Deputy Corporation Counsel Roderick Williams. "It's been such a pleasure working with you. Thank you for your service to the city."

Leslie Radcliffe, who currently chairs the commission and who previously served as vice-chair while Mattison chaired the body, agreed.

"You've been that rock. You've been that elder statesman," she said, holding back tears. "Your leadership, your compassion to the matters that come before the

commission, not just the technical, but the personal. Those things that relate to human experience ...”

“I looked to you as a mentor,” she continued. “I looked to you as an elder.”

She thanked him for stepping aside to “make room” for new leadership while he was still on the board, and for passing the baton on to her to chair the commission.

“I hope that when my time comes,” she said, that she will be remembered as “a worthy vessel of that baton” as passed along by such an able predecessor in Mattison.

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Here's the YouTube video:

<https://youtu.be/khY8VwSDNMM>