

Date: March 13, 2021

Re: Public Comment SB 1024

To: CT Planning & Development Committee Members:

For personal and professional reasons, I support SB 1024. I firmly believe it will first and foremost it allow naturally occurring "affordable" housing to take root and flourish here in CT. The addition of middle housing units will benefit towns, property owners, first time buyers, renter, the elderly, and young professionals.

Adopting multi-family zoning "as a right" where single family zoning is predominate gives new opportunity to middle and lower class households who are essential to a local and State economies and business growth. We know 50% of CT residents are not willing to pay for vital infrastructure improvements and that is why our local government officials must dig in and step up to support amendments to State General Statutes Section 8-1 and 8-2 to accomplish the following.

CT Post story reported Greenwich Town officials are not interested in S.B.1024. Greenwich is an anomaly in CT due to its very wealthy taxpayers and large number of housing authority units.

"Alban said Desegregate CT's goal is to increase the housing supply — and thereby decrease housing prices in the state. It would lead to more housing in Greenwich, but none of it for people seeking affordable places to live, she said." <https://www.ctinsider.com/local/article/Camillo-Greenwich-under-assault-by-zoning-16019552.php>

Ms. Alban's statement is cynical and unempathetic viewpoint. Yes, an increase of supply will lead to decreased housing prices and affordability in the state. That is a good thing for most residents. My family included.

The proposed zoning amendments will:

- Can decrease household costs and allow existing owners to age in place, sell existing housing stock and downsize in CT, sell existing housing stock, benefit from improvements that increase local tax revenue and support the economy.
- Remove "as of right" overly restrictive Single-Family zoning to allow the average property owner and small builders to make changes without permission when with in existing zoning regulations. It will reduce building costs involved in home modernization and renovations to incorporate a growing family, an elderly parent, or an ADU while creating energy savings.
- Multi-family zoning "as a right" will reduce public scrutiny, time & cost for a private property owner. Public stigma and "concern" has become the norm when a special permit and a hearing is publicized.
- Realize a moderate property value. The loud "anti-change" and pro-"character" defense is squeezing out the middle class. To afford current tax levels and maintain a homes value and realize a profit has been a myth perpetuated by some elected officials, residents and real estate agents. Not likely for middle income households and impossible for low or fixed income families.
- Strong local leadership can create a middle housing track and a new form of LOCAL CONTROL. Officials and local Housing Committees must advocate and educate on the benefits of middle housing.
- Public comment can be sought via a written notice by all town departments. Neighbors who take issue with a variance can contact the office or attend the meeting.

Sincerely,

Sheila Dravis-Cosgrove  
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Fairfield Affordable Housing Committee, Member  
City of Milford, Community Development Block Grant Administrator