

# **BARRY MICHELSON**

Testimony: Planning and Development Public Hearing

15 March 2021

## **Opposition to: HB 6107, SB 1027, SB 1026, SB 1024, HB 6613, HB 6611**

These are problematic bills that have little to do with sound development practices, serving only one purpose to disregard local land use controls to achieve alternative objectives. These bills should be **Voted Down**.

Affordable housing is a laudable goal; however, usurping the powers of “*We The People*” is not! Our country has a steeped tradition in self-determination with a deep respect for local home rule.

Land use controls and zoning are about more than just affordable housing. Land use controls and zoning are about balanced and orderly growth and development, preventing congestion, protecting property values and recognizing that in America, as well as here in Connecticut, we are an aspirational society capable of determining and meeting our own community needs, goals and objectives.

Many of our hard-working citizens of all races and nationalities scrimped, saved, and made great sacrifices in order to live in a specific neighborhood, or in a particular community. They do not share your vision for the irreparable changes or the damage that will be done to suburban and more rural communities by these bills

These Nutmeggers should also have rights, their voices should be heard and respected. Afterall, the health of a community is rooted in community stability, and stability in large part is based on respecting and enhancing community character, character of a zoning district and local needs. Local decisions are best made through a local process by local individuals.

It is absolutely repugnant and condescending, that here in the Constitution State, we should even have to be here to provide testimony against bills that would marginalize self-rule and subject us to bureaucratic scrutiny from Hartford.

In most instances, multifamily housing can be suitably located in buffer or areas that transition from low density to commercial districts with little or no disturbance to neighborhood character. There is generally the added benefit of convenient shopping, support services and the possibility of being served by public transportation.

Practices and proposals that diminish the value and the benefit of neighborhood character contribute to a lack of stability and do not properly address local needs leading to a loss of property value and flight of both residents and commercial business owners.

Land use regulations were promulgated for the purpose of dedicating land for varied uses, ranging from farming to commercial, institutional to industrial, single family to multifamily; as well as protecting neighborhoods from intrusive land uses, incompatible land uses, and yes, uses that are out of character and destabilizing or not serving local interests, as best determined by local electors in local communities.

We expect you to vote NO to every bill that attempts to subvert the local decision-making process and to speak out and advocate publicly for home rule.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

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