

July 16, 2022

Re: Affordable Housing Plan
Per CGS 8-30j
Town of Ridgefield

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Planning & Zoning Commission (PZC) of the Town of Ridgefield, Connecticut, I would like to thank the members of the Affordable Housing Committee, and the many residents and elected officials, who collectively engaged in the development of the following Affordable Housing Plan.

The public participation sessions provided clear evidence that the topic is complex – to the point of being confusing and frustrating to many people. Even among those who understand it well, there is disagreement on topics such as the uniform (10%) statewide quota that does not factor differences in public infrastructure, topography, etc., and the governmental methods of counting housing units. These have been mandated by the legislature under CGS 8-30g, and many of our residents believe the state statute needs improvement.

Nevertheless, this PZC fundamentally supports the core objective of providing a wide array of housing options within Ridgefield, which should be accessible to a wide array of people. Our 2020 Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) discussed this objective in detail (see Chapter 12), and it also set creation of this Affordable Housing Plan as #4 on its “Top Ten POCD Action Steps” (p. 125). We are grateful that a major priority from our POCD is hereby accomplished.

As noted in our public comments during the drafting of this plan, this PZC seeks to prioritize the creation of affordable housing in a way which physically blends into our existing built environment – for example, via adaptive reuse, incentivizing conversion of existing housing stock into statutorily-qualifying affordable units, and by mandating affordable components within any multi-unit project (i.e., inclusionary zoning). We believe that any new-build construction – affordable or not – must be carefully harmonized with the existing built environment, and that stand-alone affordable housing projects do not bolster an integrated and diverse community.

Again, we thank all those involved in developing this plan, and we look forward to shifting into implementation on the strategies outlined for PZC leadership or support.

Sincerely,

Robert Hendrick, Jr.
Chair - Planning and Zoning Commission
Town of Ridgefield