July 19,2022

To the Members of the Washington Zoning Commission:

On October 28,2021 the residents of the Town of Washington approved the Housing Plan for 2022-2027. The goals within this plan, some of which can only be reached with the help of the Zoning Commission, are significant and important for providing affordable housing for the Town’s residents.

The members of the Washington Housing Commission understand that on Monday, July 25, 2022 the Zoning Commission will be considering opting out of part of PA 21-29, ie. The part that refers to accessory apartments. We understand that it is permissible to opt out of this section and that Mike Ziska has recommended that the Town do so because our current zoning regulations are quite liberal. At our last meeting on July 12, 2022 the possibility of allowing two accessory buildings be permitted with one being rented at an affordable rate. We realize that in order for that apartment to meet the State’s definition of affordable there would have to be some deed restriction.

The Washington Housing Commission also respectfully requests that the Zoning Commission consider Section 4, #4 and #5 of the PA 21-29 which deals with multiple family dwellings.

“4 Provide for the development of housing opportunities, including opportunities for multi-family dwellings, consistent with soil types, terrain and infrastructure capacity for all residents of the municipality and the planning region in which the municipality is located as designated by the Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management under section16a-4a;.

5 Promote housing choice and economic diversity in housing, including housing for both low and moderate income households.”

Please also refer to the Town of Washington Housing Plan 2022-2027.

“Goal 2: Encourage development of “downsizing” options

1. Allow the conversion of existing larger homes to 2-3 unit for any home that can get Health District septic and well approval not just homes built before 1950. Conduct outreach to let property owners know about this option.
2. Amend the town’s zoning regulations to allow duplexes on parcels that can meet on-site septic and well requirement.
3. Amend the town’s zoning regulations to allow townhouse style (up to 4 units attached) homes in and around the village/business districts.
4. Create a “Village Housing Opportunity”Overlay Zone in and around the town’s business districts to allow smaller, more affordable single-family homes, multi-family, senior, and mixed-use housing in these districts to provide housing opportunities and reinforce the village centers.”

The Appendix of the Housing Plan gives an example of an overlay zone.

We hope that the Zoning Commission with consider working on updating zoning regulations so that the intent of PA 21-29 and the Washington Housing Plan will be met.

Thank you for you consideration of these issues.

Judie Gorra

Chairperson

Washington Housing Commission