

February 11, 2009

To: Distinguished Chairs Senator Gomes and Representative Green, Vice Chairs, Ranking Members and Members of the Connecticut General Assembly Housing Committee

Re: Proposed Bill #208 AN ACT CONCERNING THE DETERMINATION OF THE NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS IN A MUNICIPALITY

From: Westport, CT Planning and Zoning Commission, Ron Corwin, Chair/Ellie Lowenstein, Vice Chair

We have a number of suggestions for determining the number of housing units that will count toward a moratorium.

1. Count in the moratorium points, Housing Authority units and other deed restricted housing constructed prior to 1990. The Housing Authority is the major supplier of affordable housing in some towns. Those towns that have Housing Authorities or pre 1990 deed restricted housing had forethought to provide affordable housing before the state mandated it. They should not be required to increase their affordable housing at the same rate as a town that has no affordable housing, in order to get to the first moratorium of the 8-30(g) appeals process.
2. Count as affordable housing, in-law apartments that are restricted as to the age of the occupant as well as the size of the unit. These apartments provide a much needed living area for persons who cannot live on their own or can no longer manage a larger living unit. Many older adults want to move closer to their children for the help they now need, but many times cannot afford the area in which the children live. In-law apartments provide this service and may delay the move to a nursing home, where costs could be borne by all via Medicaid.
3. Count as affordable housing through yearly income and rent verification by sworn affidavit, the existing housing that may not be deed restricted but is affordable. Most of these living units have existed for a number of years and may increase in cost if torn down to provide new units.

The Westport Planning and Zoning Commission asks that you consider our recommendations. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

CC: Honorable Toni Boucher, Senator 26th District
Honorable Joe Mioli, Representative 136th District
Honorable Kim Fawcett, Representative 133rd District