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George Benson  
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## TOWN OF NEWTOWN

### Land Use Agency

February 5, 2015

CGA, Housing Committee, Affordable Housing Public Hearing Testimony  
New Haven Aldermanic Chambers, February 5, 2015

The Town of Newtown is very supportive of Affordable Housing. However, the Town also wants to maintain the ability to regulate development by encouraging affordable housing proposals that are consistent with the current zoning regulations. To facilitate affordable housing proposals the Newtown Planning and Zoning Commission has recently approved a modified Incentive Housing Zone Regulation. The new regulation retains zoning controls for the Town and financial feasibility for the developer.

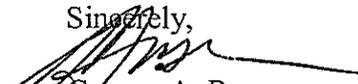
The Town is concerned with some of the 8-30g regulations and procedures that result in an inaccurate assessment of a municipality's affordable housing stock. Newtown has affordable housing that is not deed restricted and therefore not included in the state calculation, including three trailer parks, accessory apartments and approximately 16% of the residential one family housing stock that is less than \$200,000. The Town should receive some credit for this low cost housing stock that is not deed restricted and currently not included in the 10% calculation.

The current statute virtually removes all zoning restrictions on 8-30g development, leaving the towns with no regulation or input. Municipalities have design standards that include zoning restrictions that contain for example, height restrictions and building setbacks, which can be completely nullified by the 8-30g statute. The result can be affordable housing developments that are not in conformity with the community character and the intent of basic zoning theory and practice.

Most municipal zoning includes deductions of wetlands, steep slope and flood plains utilized in calculations for developable area, which are not mandatory in 8-30g. This exclusion is a deviation from long standing land use and environmental policies that apply to every other development in the towns.

The Town of Newtown recognizes that every municipality has the responsibility to support affordable housing development. Town officials believe that affordable housing should be built without conflicting with the community character. The proposed amendments to 8-30g begin a process to refine that statute, however, there are many more changes required to make the statute fair and equitable for the state, municipalities and developers.

Sincerely,



George A. Benson,  
Director of Planning