

Green Haven, Inc.
the first cohousing community
in Connecticut

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February 17, 2015

Written Testimony of

DICK MARGULIS
President, Green Haven, Inc.

Before the

Housing Committee

concerning

RAISED BILL NO. 6147: AN ACT REQUIRING AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS TO COMPLY WITH PRINCIPLES OF
SMART GROWTH

Co-Chair Winfield, Co-Chair Butler, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit Green Haven's comments on Raised Bill No. 6147, concerning placing new requirements on affordable housing developments. Green Haven, Inc. is a nonprofit corporation whose members are engaged in the development of Rocky Corner, a clustered housing neighborhood. Thirty homes are being built in Bethany by the members, the people who are planning to live there. Rocky Corner is designed to be affordable—indeed, nine of the units will literally be affordable as defined by Connecticut law—and environmentally sustainable.

In the case of Rocky Corner, there is an further major objective shared by the future residents: to preserve farmland. Rocky Corner's site in Bethany was a dairy farm from 1750 until about 20 years ago, when the owner had to abandon farming. The farm had been reduced by piecemeal sales to its present 33 acres. Rocky Corner's housing will be located on eight of those acres and the remaining 24 will be dedicated to active farming.

Not only will Rocky Corner bring some affordable housing to Bethany, which today has virtually none, but by preserving 24 acres as farmland and open space, it will be a smart-growth, antisprawl project on land that otherwise would be fated to end up as a hodgepodge of McMansions on three-acre lots bordering a major watershed of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority. Rocky Corner would satisfy several of the espoused objectives of H.B. 6750, but as written, H.B. 6750 would prohibit Rocky Corner from ever being built. For one example, Rocky Corner, though only 10 miles from downtown New Haven, is three miles past the end of the nearest public bus line.

For those interested in learning more, Rocky Corner has a Web site at www.RockyCorner.org.

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We hope the Legislature will reject this bill.

Thank you for your consideration and, we hope, positive response to our comments, respectfully submitted today.

GREEN HAVEN, INC.

BY /s/ Dick Margulis

Dick Margulis

PRESIDENT