



February 29, 2016

re: Raised H.B. No. 5363 An Act Concerning The Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals Procedure

The original 8-30g legislation served the valuable purpose of forcing many suburban Connecticut towns to examine the lack of affordable housing in their communities. The problem is that the onerous requirements of this statute have had at least four serious unintended consequences:

- \* very little affordable housing has been constructed in the State because towns have resisted 8-30g's overriding of local zoning ordinances, ordinances that serve as the foundation of towns' planning and neighborhood structures,
- \* by using strict income standards for 8-30g compliance, housing for seniors has been subordinated, and in some cases, seniors have fewer housing options than they did prior to the 8-30g era,
- \* developers are routinely using 8-30g to propose projects in areas where housing is unsuitable and would otherwise not be built, to include:
  - \* in a public water supply watershed,
  - \* in close proximity to I-95 in flood prone areas,
  - \* in neighborhoods where the density of the 8-30g development is many times greater than the neighborhood has ever experienced and that results in strains on parking, traffic, and the provision of public services,
- \* by use of historically arbitrary dating and restrictive definitions, 8-30g fails to credit towns for homeless shelters, income restricted senior housing constructed before 1990, group homes for the mentally and physically disabled, etc.

We support H.B. No. 5363 because it represents an incremental step in correcting the deep-seated flaws in 8-30g and begins a process of mitigating the unintended consequences of 8-30g.

Respectfully submitted,

Fairfielders Protecting Land and Neighborhoods

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**FairfieldPLAN's mission is to support open spaces, natural resources and the character of our neighborhoods, by**

- **supporting positive government action through good laws, regulations and land use decisions**
- **promoting appropriate development to achieve both economic and environmental health**
- **being a resource for local groups by providing education, support and advocacy**
- **encouraging and sponsoring planning initiatives**