



Making Great Communities Happen

Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association

Testimony regarding

Proposed Bill No. 6756 – AN ACT CONCERNING OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION IN CLUSTER DEVELOPMENTS

CCAPA opposes this Proposed Bill. Title 8 of the Connecticut General Statutes provides broad latitude to municipalities in defining, determining, and prioritizing land set aside for “recreational, conservation, and agricultural purposes,” as well as for “open space, parks, and playgrounds” when land is subdivided within those communities. Just as the function of conservation or park lands may vary widely from town to city, the local need or priority for this land – as expressed in the municipal Plan of Conservation & Development – may also be quite wide-ranging.

The Proposed Bill seeks to eliminate a municipality’s flexibility when it comes to how it calculates and incentivizes proposed open space in cluster developments (as defined in CGS §8-18). Given that a municipality is given the discretion on defining open space, identifying critical conservation priorities, requiring (or not requiring) a conservation set-aside, using (or not using) a cluster development model, and establishing (or not establishing) a system of development incentives, it is incongruous and unnecessary for the State to prohibit one specific element from an open space calculation. It is more appropriate to leave these decisions to the individual communities and their Planning Commissions.

WHO WE ARE

The Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association (CCAPA) has over 420 members who are governmental and consulting planners, land use attorneys, citizen planners, and other professionals engaged in planning and managing land use, economic development, housing, transportation, and conservation for local, regional, and State governments, private businesses and other entities. CCAPA has long been committed to assisting the legislature and State agencies with developing and furthering responsible growth management principles. The APA is an independent, not-for-profit, national educational organization that provides leadership in the development of vital communities.

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