



Connecticut

Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association

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PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

SB-1164: AN ACT CONCERNING NOTICE OF ZONING APPLICATIONS TO ADJOINING MUNICIPALITIES AND DESIGNATION OF MUNICIPAL INLAND WETLAND AGENCIES

OVERVIEW: CCAPA opposes this proposal to reduce municipal flexibility in designing the approach each town develops to meeting statutory requirements for land use approvals.

SUMMARY: This bill would require that municipalities that have assigned inland wetlands regulatory responsibilities to an existing commission create a separate wetlands agency.

ANALYSIS: The bill would require nearly 60 municipalities to reconfigure their regulatory systems. Some municipalities that do not have extensive amounts of wetlands or that are effectively built out may have to create a new agency with new volunteers, staffing, and more meetings for very little work.

Municipalities have finely tuned their regulatory regimen based on the statutes to meet town-specific goals and recognize town-specific conditions (demographics, topography, environment, etc.). This proposed change would disrupt municipal land use regulation and discourage consideration of alternative regulatory systems where and if they are shown to be practical.

CCAPA POSITION: CCAPA strongly opposes this bill and recommends no further consideration by the Committee. Amendments to the statutory procedures and requirements that municipalities have deliberately and carefully molded to address their own goals and needs should be approached with the utmost care.

Comprehensive, deliberate, and objective considerations of these and other concepts to improve the land use planning and regulatory processes should properly be an activity lead by the new Office of Responsible Growth, not by piecemeal amendments to long-established statutory standards.