



Connecticut

Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association

Government Relations Chairman: Christopher S. Wood, AICP
Phone: 203 558-0654 woodplanning@charter.net www.ccapa.org

FEBRUARY 6, 2007

SELECT COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

SUBJECT MATTER HEARING: BILLS CONCERNING AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SECTION 8-30G

SUMMARY: The Select Committee on Housing is holding a Subject Matter Hearing on 24 bills that propose various amendments to Section 8-30g, the Affordable Housing Land Use Appeals process.

CCAPA POSITION: The creation of more housing units that are affordable to working class individuals and families is critical for long term economic growth, social equity, responsible development, and vibrant and healthy communities in our State. Section 8-30g is the only tool at the moment that is available to help create new affordable housing units. Most of the proposed bills are intended to address issues that sometimes are encountered in individual 8-30g projects around the State, but if adopted could have the unintended consequence of making it more costly, more difficult, and ultimately less likely, to build affordable housing units under the statute.

The bills would add pre-development costs, limit density or building height, or require post-development fees, all of which would add to the already high hurdles of the percentage of affordable units and length of affordability already in 8-30g. Many of these bills would treat 8-30g affordable housing developments differently than other housing developments. While the public purpose of 8-30g is to encourage the provision of affordable housing units, these proposed amendments might discourage the creation of affordable housing units.

CCAPA supports an incentive based approach to creating affordable housing which would include technical assistance to municipalities to adopt zoning, development and design options they could use to create affordable housing in their communities; more aggressive State level planning and policy guidance and assistance in the area of housing and affordability as it affects the State and its various sub-markets; and financial incentives that reward municipalities for creating new affordable units and for providing the planning and zoning foundation to encourage their development.

CCAPA believes the legislature should focus on new incentive-based approaches, which if successful over time would obviate the need for the 8-30g land use appeals process. However until there is a viable incentive based alternative to 8-30g we recommend the statute stand as written.