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February 10, 2015

Town Supervisor Peter Parsons  
Lewisboro Town House  
11 Main Street  
South Salem NY 10590

Dear Supervisor Parsons:

Re: Discussions as it relates the Housing Committee's proposed amendments

**Overview:**

I apologize for not being able to attend this evening's discussion on the Town's Housing Committee's proposed amendments due to a prior commitment down county.

Over several years and prior administrations there have been discussions about affordable housing (this does not relate to middle income housing) with really no significant progress being made in all these years. The proposed amendments being presented by the town's housing committee is a positive step in the right direction to start developing affordable housing for the town which is needed. As we have seen in surrounding communities both in NY and CT affordable housing is achievable and has no negative impact on the community or destroys the housing market. The stigma of allowing affordable housing in a community will turn a municipality into something less desirable is unsubstantiated.

**Multifamily housing in business districts:**

This type of housing is not new and is allowed in many communities across our nation. Allowing for multifamily housing in business districts would enhance commerce to the local businesses due to the close proximity of the residents to these local businesses. I do not foresee any negative impact on the town by adopting this proposed amendment and could possibly increase tax revenues for the town.

**County Model Ordinance:**

Many municipalities have adopted this model without any significant detriment to their own communities. In no way does it portray the county trying to "take over local ordinances – It is two levels of government (county and local) working in partnership to reach a common goal. It makes no sense to "recreate the wheel" when there is already a very useable model. Adopting this model ordinance will not diminish the quality of the town.

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**Allow accessory apartments as of right:**

This would give homeowners (taxpayers) more flexibility and freedom in managing their property and would increase the value of their home. It would also afford the homeowner a source of revenue that would be a positive for the homeowner and the community. For those homeowners that are “just getting by” it would allow them an option to stay in their homes without having to move or even worse be foreclosed upon. Let’s all face reality there are already accessory apartments in homes around town. This has not diminished the quality of the town. If this amendment is adopted it is highly unlikely that there will be a rush of accessory apartments being built around town. This proposed amendment would allow the homeowner more flexibility and freedom to manage the home they work hard for.

**Closing:**

Affordable housing is important to everyone and the community as a whole. It does not detract from a community it is an enhancement to the community. Affordable housing is something that benefits everyone not only that particular person or family but the community as an entirety. Thank you for your time and consideration regarding this important issue of affordable housing which many communities across our great nation are facing. If you need further please feel free to contact me

Sincerely,

*Adam Ochs*

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