

The below is a letter from a resident who was not able to make it to the rescheduled meeting:

After careful review of the complaints made by the Monitor against the town of Lewisboro, I am very concerned that the proposed change to the zoning ordinance to do away with the requirement of a Special Permit for accessory apartment is not only ill-advised, it wholly fails to address Mr. Johnson's major concerns. I would ask the board to take the time to perform a more comprehensive review of our regulations to identify changes that might serve homeowners, rather than harm their interests, while at the same time better addressing HUD's concerns.

Bedford, North Salem and Somers all passed muster despite having special permit requirements similar to Lewisboro'. Even Pound Ridge, which requires planning board site plan approval for newly constructed accessory units, received praise for expanding multifamily housing by special permit.

Mr. Johnson's report reveals three major concerns, none of which are addressed by the current proposal: a) more multifamily housing be permitted throughout districts; b) revision of current density and bulk regulations, which he labels "exclusionary;" and c) actual construction of new units.

A special permit is a permit not a variance, meaning that accessory units are already a permitted use, just one with a checklist of conditions added because residential district uses are otherwise exempt from board review. If anything, the town should address the Monitor's legitimate concerns by reviewing regulations where Lewisboro is an outlier, not where we are in step with common practices.

Finally, with respect to both the proposed change and passage of the model ordinance--what is gained by rushing without all of the facts towards passage of a piece of legislation which, by its very nature erodes our constitutional right of "home rule?"

Consider that despite caving into HUD and adopting the model ordinance, three towns were still singled out for criticism in the Monitor's Sept. 8, 2014 report. Meanwhile just two weeks ago the Supreme Court heard arguments in Texas v. ICP, a potential landmark case challenging HUD's controversial extension of the "disparate impact" test to the agency's draconian attempts at social engineering.

Thank you for listening to my concerns. Dean Travalino