

August 15, 2022

Dear Ms. Gay Smith,

This letter is respectfully being submitted to you, as the Chair of the Hingham Accessory Dwelling Unit Study Committee, on behalf of the Commission on Disabilities. The Commission would like to thank you, and the rest of the members of the team, for looking at creating housing opportunities for individuals with disabilities in Hingham.

It has come to the Commission on Disabilities attention that the ADU Study Committee is deliberating permitted detached ADU's as rental properties in Hingham. The COD is unanimously, and firmly, opposed to this idea for the following reasons.

Permitting detached ADU's came in front of the Planning Board based on a Citizen's Petition. The spirit of the Citizen's Petition was to allow for a conversion of an existing structure to be used for *family members of the homeowner*. The Planning Board recommended further study of the concept of detached ADU's.

The 2022 Town Meeting charged the Study Committee with the following:

*That the Town establish a committee, to be known as the ADU Study Committee, for the purpose **of reviewing the merits of this Warrant Article and/or the merits of amending the provisions of the Hingham Zoning Bylaw, Section V-K, or other applicable provisions of the Zoning By-law, to allow detached accessory dwelling units and/or to amend any other provisions of the Zoning By-law reasonably related to the creation of accessory dwelling units (either attached or detached), and to submit a written report to the Planning Board setting forth whether the Committee recommends in favor of any such amendment(s) and the reasons for such recommendations. If any amendments are recommended, the Committee shall include in its report its proposed changes.** The Committee shall consist of seven members as follows: one member of the Planning Board (or its designee) who shall be the Chair of the Committee, one member of the Council on Aging (or its designee), one member of the Commission on Disabilities (or its designee), one member of the Zoning Board of Appeals (or its designee), one member of the Historic Districts Commission (or its designee), one resident of the Town appointed by the Board of Selectmen, and one resident of the Town appointed by the Moderator who shall not be members of the foregoing Boards. The Committee shall endeavor to issue its report to the Planning Board within one year of its formation, but in no event later than October 1, 2022. Upon receipt of such report, the Planning Board shall hold at least one public meeting in advance of the December 1 deadline for submission of zoning amendments as set forth in Article 2, Section 7 of the Hingham General By- 61 laws, to determine if the Planning Board will elect to submit, or to support the submission of, one or more zoning amendments based on the report of the Committee.*

The Commission on Disabilities does not agree that changing Single- family zoning into Multi-Family/ Commercial Zoning is in the spirit of the Warrant Article approved at Town Meeting. The COD is deeply concerned that if ADU’s were converted, or built, and rented at fair market value in Hingham people living on Social Security, or benefits from DDS (Disability Determination Service) would often be priced out of affording these units.

Rent for a 1 bedroom unit in Hingham, without utilities, is typically between about \$1,850 and \$2,800 a month. Please see rental comps below:

1 Station Street	1 bd/ 1 bath	Water included/ no other utilities included	\$1,850 & first and last month for security
Avalon	1 bed/ 1 bath 722 sq ft	Water included/ No other utilities included	\$2,800 first and last month security
Beals Cove	1 bedroom	Water included/ no other utilities included	\$1,900 first and last month security
		<b>Typical Rent for 1 bedroom in Hingham</b>	<b>\$1,900- \$2,1800</b>
		<b>Annual rent for 1 bedroom in Hingham</b>	<b>\$24, 480</b>
		Median individual income with a disability in MA	\$21,879 *Source ADA Parc 2018 data

The Commission on Disabilities strongly encourages the ADU Study Committee to draft By-laws that can be supported by the Planning Board, and ultimately Town Meeting in 2023, that work in concert with Hingham’s Single-family community standards. We believe that fostering ADU’s which can be used by family members will have minimal impact on Hingham’s infrastructure and could achieve the goal of allowing seniors to age in place and created housing options for adults with disabilities.

Thank you,

The Commission on Disabilities

Dr. Stephanie Gertz- Chair

Megan Baker- Secretary

Jane Mc Grath

Diane DeNapoli- Vice Chair

Sharon Allen

Keith Jermyn

