

From: [Mark Cullings](#)
To: [Wentworth, Emily](#)
Subject: ADU Meeting 3/1/22
Date: Wednesday, March 2, 2022 3:24:00 PM

Hi Emily,

I don't have Jennifer's contact info, so I'd like to ask you to forward this to her and/or the committee.

I thought last night's meeting was terrific. It was very smart to have both the fire and building departments offer their takes on ADUs and I was happy to hear that both officials support the concept. The questions asked and concerns voiced were good ones.

I am hopeful that the committee will avail itself of existing information and material that I believe can offer answers to at least some questions. I would suggest that both the building and fire departments could glean some great information if they'd be willing to talk to their counterparts in towns that've had detached ADUs on the books for a while. I think those conversations would go a long way toward answering some of the concerns voiced. Somehow I can't avoid suggesting not trying to reinvent the wheel....

I really regret the lack of current comprehensive material on ADUs. The Pioneer Institute study of 2014 was an invaluable resource, but apparently little has been done since.

I also hope that the committee focuses on the positive aspects of permitting detached ADUs in Hingham. I regret that all too often conversations seem to spend more time on the potential for abuse. As has been said multiple times, doing nothing because of potential abuse isn't the way to run a railroad.

One of the stickiest wickets, I believe, is the question of a definition of 'Family.' A contact I made several years ago in Weston's planning board office advised against trying to define it. Here's something she wrote in 2014:

"There have been countless discussions on accessory apts. as to whether units can be rented to anyone or just to "blood relatives" or "family". I am not fully up to speed on case law on this topic but I would argue that an accessory unit will generate the same amount of activity whether the renters are "family" or non-family. It's the same impact of noise, coming and going, parking, etc. The tracking of "blood relatives/family" (what is a "family" today?) is an administrative nightmare for the zoning enforcement officer.

I have not and will not advocate having a restriction stating only "family" should be living in the accessory units. My guess is that it would not stand up in court and from a practical perspective, it's the same impact."

Her comments have stuck with me.

Congratulations on a great start. It's a very worthwhile project.

Cheers,

Mark
781-856-5358