



230 Mountain View Road Copake, New York 12516
Tel: 518-329-1234

September 20, 2023

Re: Pro-Housing Community Program
Letter of Intent
Town of Copake

To whom it may concern:

The Town of Copake hereby expresses its intent to seek approval as a certified Pro-Housing Community.

Earlier this month, the Town Board was unanimous in its adoption of an innovative law intended to address the housing crisis in our Town. This law was prompted by our recognition of the shortage of affordable housing which was supported by the findings of the Columbia County Housing Brief, a study and report completed by Hudson Valley Patterns for Progress at the request of the Columbia County Board of Supervisors.

Our new law was inspired by a law passed in a Dutchess County Town, but other than that, it was largely unprecedented. In January 2023 a three person committee was appointed by the Town Board and tasked with recommending changes to our zoning which would encourage the creation of affordable housing. The ad hoc task force was comprised of Planning Board Chair Bob Haight, ZBA Vice Chair Dale Peterson and Meredith Kane, an attorney recently retired from Paul Weiss and a member of the Columbia County Housing Committee.

In February 2023 the Town Board passed a moratorium on major subdivision in the Town while the task force studied the Code. Upon receiving their recommendations, the Town Board met repeatedly with the Task Force and our attorney to draft this novel law. After hearing comments from our County Planning Board, our own Planning Board and interested residents, the Town Board passed the new law on September 5, 2023. (A copy of the new law is attached to this email.)

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In essence the law places a responsibility on developers to create affordable housing. The law gives density incentives for developers who comply. The housing can be part of the subdivision or located elsewhere in the Town. Additionally, the Law streamlines the permitting process for Accessory Dwellings.

This law, which reflects eight months' work on the part of the Town, is cutting edge. It demonstrates the commitment of the Town to address a serious problem in Copake. Although the County report showed the housing shortage in Copake was less severe than in most of the County, the Town Board still recognizes that many rents much less purchase prices are out of reach for families. This is a situation which we want to address, and we look forward to working with the Pro-Housing Community Program in moving forward.

We are having a Special Town Board meeting on October 3, 2023 and intend to pass the Resolution on that date.

Very truly yours,

JEANNE E. METTLER
Supervisor