

From: HENRY FERGUSON [mailto:harryferg3@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, March 17, 2020 4:15 PM
To: Neville, Elizabeth; Michaelis, Jessica
Subject: [SPAM] - Change of Zone Application for Fishers Island UFSD/Walsh Park ("Parcel")

This email is to strongly support the Application for a Change of Zone to permit six affordable housing units on the Parcel. Please provide copies of this email to Members of the Town Board and Planning Committee.

While currently seasonal residents, I grew up on Fishers Island and have lived in the same house for about 71 years. My wife is co-owner of the house. Growing up there were perhaps 600 year-round residents, including all of the school teachers, everyone who worked for the Fishers Island Utility Company and most of those employed on the Island. Currently, there are perhaps 230 year-round residents. The sharp decrease in the population over the years led to the formation of Walsh Park Benevolent Corporation in the 1980s which has engaged in an on-going campaign to provide affordable year-round housing and to stabilize the year-round population to the greatest extent possible given its resources.

The shortage of affordable year-round housing recently led to the successful application by the Utility Company for an Hamlet Density zone to build two units for two employees and their families who would otherwise commute from Connecticut and not strengthen the fabric of the year-round community by participating in the Fire Department, Ambulance Squad and other community activities and boards. Every additional family will benefit the Island.

There is a demand for affordable year-round housing but finding land for such development has been difficult. The Parcel is of reasonable size and located in an area which is itself relatively densely developed. It appears that some of the concerns arose from the two units being constructed by the Utility Company which are large, but located elsewhere on the west end of the Island. They are in fact visible from our house but are not objectionable, particularly in light of the need for employee housing and the benefits new year-round residents will bring to the Island. We have every confidence that Tod Williams and Billie Tsien Architects will design six affordable units whose scale and appearance will be in keeping with the development surrounding the Parcel.

The importance to Fishers Island of more affordable housing for year-round families cannot be exaggerated. It will benefit all residents, both seasonal and year-round. Please approve the Application for the Change of Zone.

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