

MEMORANDUM

TO: Zoning Commission

FROM: Alter & Pearson, LLC

DATE: January 12, 2023

RE: Affordable Housing Need in Simsbury

This memorandum is intended to provide the Commission with an opportunity to review available data that will confirm the acknowledged need for affordable housing in Simsbury.

I. Affordable Housing in Simsbury

Reference is made to the **Simsbury Affordable Housing Plan 2020-2025** (the “Plan”) developed by the Simsbury Planning Commission. The Planning Commission conducted a study of the then current housing circumstances in the Town of Simsbury in an effort to develop a meaningful plan to develop affordable housing based on the conclusion that “additional affordable housing units in Simsbury will benefit the community as a whole.”

Reference is also made to the **Town of Simsbury 2017 Plan of Conservation & Development** which established policies in support of affordable housing for individuals and families.

II. Current Affordable Housing Situation

The Affordable Appeals List is a report of the percentages of deed-restricted and governmentally-assisted affordable housing units for all of Connecticut’s municipalities that is issued by the Connecticut Department of Housing (“DOH”). The 2021 list (published in 2022) shows that 4.80% of dwelling units in Simsbury qualified as affordable housing, a slight decrease from the 2020 list (showing 4.90%). As the Commission is well-aware, until a community attains a threshold of not less than 10% affordable units, the community is subject to the provisions of Connecticut General Statutes §8-30g.

The goals and objectives presented in the Plan are an optimistic approach to the future development of affordable housing in Simsbury. Each of the suggested policies or regulation changes must be implemented by the appropriate authority to consistently promote a diversity in housing opportunities in Simsbury.

Current market rate rents for apartments in Simsbury are far above the projected rental rates for dwelling units developed as affordable housing in accordance with the standards of Connecticut General Statutes. The cost of land and costs of development render it impossible to develop housing units that will meet the affordable standards without the Commission’s approving additional density greater than that permitted by the existing regulations and/or by the

creation of other government programs that support the development, such as significant tax incentives. The Affordable Housing Plan has specific actions that would greatly enhance the effort to accomplish these goals.

If Simsbury is to continue its effort to provide housing opportunities for a wide range of diverse citizens, then it must take reasonable steps to meet the needs of people who wish to move to Simsbury, or who wish to remain here.

Reference to the stated goals of the Plan of Conservation and Development are summarized on Page 7 of the Affordable Housing Plan. The two documents are internally consistent in addressing the community need for more diverse, more affordable housing.