



Michael A. Maresco
Town Administrator

Town of Marshfield

870 Moraine Street

Marshfield, Massachusetts 02050

Tel: 781-834-5563

Fax: 781-834-5527

February 15, 2023

Jacob M. Love, Esq.
Lawyers for Civil Rights
61 Batterymarch Street 5th Floor
Boston, MA 02110

Sent via Post and Email: jlove@lawyersforcivilrights.org

RE: Demand Letter to the Town of Marshfield dated February 6, 2023

Dear Attorney Love:

On behalf of the Town of Marshfield and its Select Board, I am writing to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated February 6, 2023.

The purposed of this letter is to provide some insight into the Town of Marshfield's viewpoint and position concerning the submission of a multi-family zoning action plan to the Commonwealth.

For your information, the Town of Marshfield, unlike many other local communities, has worked diligently to creating affordable housing for decades. Dating back to the early 1970's, the Town of Marshfield and developers with whom it worked cooperatively to approve affordable housing options, created approximately 700 apartment units on Route 139 most of which are affordable to someone earning 80% of the area median income even today.

Over the next three decades, the Town of Marshfield has never denied an affordable housing development, has supported affordable housing through the establishment of a Housing Partnership (MHOP) which remains active, has and continues to employ a housing consultant more recently with annual appropriation of funds from the Town Community Preservation Fund, and given its own land worth in excess of \$350,000 and significant funding (\$500,000) to establish affordable housing units for disadvantaged veterans.

Among the low and moderate income projects that the Town and its Board of Appeals has recently approved are Beacon Shore Drive (100 units), Maitlin Development (20 units), Village at Webster Place (40 units), The Madison (248 units), and Mill Creek (270 units). The Town and Planning Board has additionally approved seven (7) multi-family age restricted developments and nine (9) apartment complexes that are not age restricted or deed restricted. Additionally, the Town has approved Highland Green Age Restricted Affordable (22 units), an affordable Village District for townhouses, and commercial and residential development behind Roche Bros. Supermarket (10 units built, 5 units pending construction). The Town also created 27 affordable homes with deed restriction through the MHOP Program. The Town has previously adopted Inclusionary Zoning, as well as re-zoned Downtown to have mixed use housing over commercial by permit. At this upcoming Annual Town Meeting, April

Attorney Love
February 15, 2023
Page 2

24, 2023, the Planning Board is proposing changing the zoning bylaws to permit accessory apartments to by-right nearly town-wide.

Its our view that not even the MBTA Communities guidelines require the aspired number of multi-family housing to be affordable.

Our position at this time is also impacted by large expanse of land in the town that is either already dedicated open space or conservation land and permanently protected natural resource land as well has another expanse of land that is jurisdictionally apart of state wetland resource areas or sensitive environmental habitat land. The Town of Marshfield Planning staff, including a full and part time Town Planner, is still working with the compliance model that was released by the State at the end of November.

The Town is not prepared to identify an area to be designated as an MBTA Community Overlay District until the Town has had public discussion; allowing our staff, public and elected officials, and residents to engage in dialogue and the MBTA Zoning Law does not preclude municipalities from submitting plans after the deadlines.

By not filing the MBTA Communities action plan, the Town of Marshfield is cognizant that the Town will not be eligible for State funding on three different grants, this year. The Town has not applied for any of these grants in the recent past.

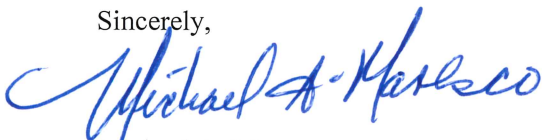
We are informed that the Commonwealth in an effort to gain community support intends to cut Housing Authority funding. We in Marshfield, question the wisdom of proposed funding cuts to the Housing Authority which is independent of the Town, and functions as a lifeline to those who need affordable housing?

The State law is clear that the most rigorous requirements relate to communities within a half mile of a commuter rail, ferry, or bus station. The Marshfield Town line is 1.6 miles from Greenbush commuter rail station. The State wants communities to have 10% of housing stock attached to multi-family housing, the Town of Marshfield already has close to 18% of housing stock attached to multi-family housing. The Town is committed to helping with housing affordability and has concerns with a top down one-size-fits-all approach to a new multi-family law that focuses on producing more market rate housing, rather than affordability.

You should be advised that, the Town of Marshfield Planning Board will be holding a public meeting on February 15, 2023 to discuss locating a 50 acre contiguous site that does not have excluded or sensitive lands and locating a minimum 15 units per acre by-right district. Once this process is complete, I am sure there will be more to report.

Thank you for your attention to the affordability of housing in Massachusetts. It is with great hope that this letter serves as a notice of Marshfield's dedication to affordable housing.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Maresco
Town Administrator