

Response to Attorney Smith's Letter of 6/26/25

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Attorney Smith, in his letter to the Commission dated today, stated that my proposed regulations would modify the mass, height, and population density of multifamily developments. I agree. Under the enabling statute, the zoning regulations are allowed to regulate the height, number of stories, and size of buildings and other structures.

If a developer believes that a zoning regulation will cause an undue hardship, he has the right to go to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a variance. He also has the right to propose changes to the regulations.

Attorney Smith stated that the Fire Department operates a 75-foot ladder truck, which is sufficient to reach the upper stories of a five-story or six-story building. I agree if the fire truck is able to get close enough to the unit on fire. However, if I were a resident, with or without sprinklers, I would feel safer on the first, second, or third floor.

It was interesting that Attorney Smith said that my proposed regulations are *not appropriate for good planning* necessary to encourage multifamily housing developments in the zones where it is currently permitted by right. On this, I respectfully disagree. If maximizing unit density is an example of good planning, even if it is based on the underlying goal that maximizing density will result in more affordable housing, then why does New York have such high taxes and is unaffordable for everyone except the rich?

I also do not believe good planning includes allowing the construction of buildings that can be up to four times as high as adjacent and nearby buildings.

Good planning should enable *reasonable economic development* while also *protecting the quality of life, property values, and the rural residential character of our town*. The current multifamily regulations do not represent good planning and, if left intact, will eventually erode the residential and rural character, as well as the quality of life for residents, especially in Gales Ferry and Ledyard Center.

My proposed amendments are consistent with the 10 purposes of the Ledyard Zoning Regulations.

The purposes are listed in §1.3 of the zoning regulations, which are to (A) lessen congestion in the streets; (B) secure safety from fire, panic, flood, and other dangers; (C) promote health and the general welfare; (D) provide adequate light and air; (E) protect the state's historic, tribal, cultural and environmental resources; (F) facilitate the adequate provision for transportation, water, sewerage, schools, parks, and other public requirements; (G) consider the impact of permitted land uses on contiguous municipalities and on the planning region; (H) address significant disparities in housing needs and access to educational, occupational and other opportunities; (I) promote efficient review of proposals and applications; and (J) affirmatively further the purposes of the federal Fair Housing Act.

Respectfully,

Eric Treaster