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5 Auburn Street / Affordable Housing

Sally Penney <spenney82@gmail.com>
To: selectboard@natickma.org

Tue, Feb 28, 2023 at 9:31 PM

To the Select Board,

My name is Sally Penney. I have been a Natick resident for the last 6 years and I live at [6 Greenleaf Road](#).

I'm writing today in support of opportunities for more affordable housing in Natick. I understand that the Select Board will soon be voting on the disposition of property at 5 Auburn Street, and that 2 bidders are proposing building affordable housing units on the property.

We are facing an affordable housing crisis in our town, state and across the country, and Natick needs to step up and do its part in trying to address the crisis. The Town has funded just one new affordable housing structure with 2 units in the last 40 years. It's time to change that tally.

High housing costs in Massachusetts place significant financial pressure on the state's residents, and a lack of affordable housing can decrease the region's competitiveness. In the short time my family has lived in Natick, our neighborhood which used to be made up of "starter homes" under \$500K has become unaffordable for families just starting out, and many of those homes have been converted to 3K+ square feet, well out of reach for most families. Many of my neighbors have lived here for 30+ years and may be interested in downsizing, but would struggle to find places they could afford elsewhere in Natick. Many of the town's most important workers - teachers, first responders, etc. are being forced to look outside Natick for housing due to the lack of affordable options.

For these reasons, I write in support of the two affordable housing bids for the 5 Auburn Street site. While these proposals will provide less revenue to the town, the addition of so many new affordable housing units would be well worth the immediate lost revenue. The results of the Community Preservation Act vote in November 2022 show that over 60% of Natick residents support affordable housing, open space, and historic preservation - all three of which would benefit from the affordable housing options for this site.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Sally Penney

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Sally D. Penney  
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