



Joan McNamara <jmcnamara@natickma.org>

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## In favor of affordable housing at 5 Auburn St.

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**Smitha Radhakrishnan** <sradhkr@wellesley.edu>  
To: selectboard@natickma.org

Wed, Mar 1, 2023 at 9:56 PM

To the Select Board:

My name is Smitha Radhakrishnan. I have been a Natick resident for the last 8 years and I live in Precinct #4.

We are facing an affordable housing crisis in our Town and across the Commonwealth. 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. Our teachers, social workers, public safety professionals, and service sector workers will continue to need affordable places to live and thrive in this town. Moreover, the lack of affordable housing in Natick is, at its core, an equity issue, extending decades of unofficial discriminatory practices. Despite these pressing issues, the Town of Natick has funded just one new affordable housing structure with 2 units in the last 40 years. It is time to change that tally and the Auburn St. property is an important, perhaps even historic, opportunity. The fact that the Natick Affordable Housing Trust has pledged over \$600,000 towards a 100% affordable project on the site means that choosing a 100% affordable housing option can help the Trust fulfill its mission as well.

I want to see my town advance equity in a meaningful way in order to fulfill our obligation to residents of the Commonwealth. Expanding access to affordable housing is one fundamental way to do that. I urge the Select Board to support one of the two 100% affordable housing options currently under consideration. In particular, I favor the MetroWest option for 32 units, which would actually make a dent in the demand for affordable housing that exists, welcoming families, seniors, veterans, teachers and many other groups into our town who are currently excluded.

Thank you for your service on the Select Board, and for your attention to this critical issue, the impact of which will be felt for decades to come.

Sincerely,  
Smitha Radhakrishnan

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**Smitha Radhakrishnan, Ph.D. (she/hers)**  
LuElla LaMer Professor of Women's Studies  
Professor and Chair of Sociology  
Deputy Editor, [GENDER AND SOCIETY](#)

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