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HOUSING & SHELTERING
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Select Board and Town Manager
FROM: Housing and Sheltering Committee
RE: 2014 Annual Town Meeting Citizen Petition Articles
DATE: March 26, 2014

At their March 12, 2014 the Housing and Sheltering Committee reviewed and discussed various Citizen Petition Articles as they could have an impact on housing in the community. The committee based their rationale on findings and recommendations from the Housing Production Plan and Comprehensive Housing Market Study.

House No. 1167 to Amend MGL 40B to Count Section 8 Voucher Holders

The Committee voted unanimously (5-0; Denise Leduc was absent) to **not support** this article because it could have the inverse effect of reducing the Town's obligation to create more affordable housing, and it would be extremely difficult to track tenants and manage such a program. For instance, Section 8 tenants with mobile vouchers from administering agencies out of Amherst could live in the community and it would be difficult to account for these households. This article does not provide a significant enough reason to try and change state statute.

Community Preservation Act (CPA) Surcharge Increase

The Committee voted 4-0-1 **to support** this article. The Committee realizes that the article as written may have legal challenges and need to be refined to achieve its goal, but in principle, it is a valid proposal to increase the rate of the CPA surcharge to 3 percent. At this rate and at the level of state match, it could possibly quadruple the amount of funds available each year, leveraging more funds for housing as well as the other categories.

Low Income Property Tax Credit

The Committee voted unanimously (5-0) to **not support** this article, expressing concern that it was convoluted and difficult to understand, and it would set up a program that is complicated to manage. The article does not encourage the development of new housing units and there are simpler solutions, such as establishing a local voucher program that could accomplish a similar goal.

Echo Village Eminent Domain

The committee voted unanimously (5-0) **to not take a position** on this article.