Information on affordable housing and 40B housing in Concord

Some Concord residents received a mass mailing recently from the Massachusetts Slow Growth Initiative reporting information on 40B housing and its costs to the Town. Much of this information is incorrect, and some clarification might be helpful using current information on regulations and status of projects in Concord.

- Concord has approximately 6,095 housing units (as of the 2000 Census). Our 10% goal is 610 units of affordable housing (as defined by the State). We already have 330 affordable units included on the State's Department of Housing and Community Development Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI), and are 300 short of the 10% state mandate, according to that list. The 350 rental units approved in 2008 will help the Town achieve its 10% goal (provided that the units are constructed) for now and hopefully to 2020.
- State regulations note that while appropriate density depends on many site-specific factors, a density of 8 units per acre is appropriate for areas in a Town like Concord where there is no access to public sewers, or 25 units per acre where there is access to public sewer or private wastewater treatment facility. No 40B projects have been approved in Concord with a density greater than 12 units/acre. The two densest developments in Concord each have 25 units per acre they are Concord Green and Concord Crossing, which were developed under the Zoning regulations that were in effect at the time of construction.
- Large scale commercial development is not permitted under Ch. 40B. 40B is for
 affordable residential development only. Small, accessory commercial uses may be
 allowed in a 40B if the community so chooses. In addition, Concord's pattern of
 development, zoning and land constraints (such as floodplain, wetlands and
 groundwater) significantly deter development of any large super-store (e.g., Walmart).
- Concord continues to work with the State to improve and enhance the State's affordable
 housing regulations and guidelines, and some of the suggestions have already been
 included in recent amendments.
- To get Concord specific facts on affordable housing and the Town's efforts, go to www.concordma.gov.