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**Gary Christenson, Mayor**

**TO:** Malden City Council and  
Malden Planning Board  
**FROM:** Mayor Gary Christenson  
**DATE:** January 27, 2025  
**RE:** Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Proposed Zoning Amendments

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I write to follow up on our proposal recently submitted to the City Council regarding Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and the local zoning process that will apply. Our team spent a significant amount of time in coming up with the proposal that was submitted, and I appreciate the effort and time that the City Council has spent considering it as well.

At this point, I believe it is worth mentioning that our administration has been a strong advocate for more housing, especially as it pertains to affordable housing. From the Salvation Army project to the Bryant Street proposal, to providing hundreds of affordable housing units at Overlook Ridge, we have been doing all that we can to address this pressing need. And we've done this in a transparent way by involving the community in these projects.

That process remains the same in the proposal before you tonight as we included a requirement that ADUs be subject to a Site Plan Review process. This process is intended to provide a transparent decision-making platform from which that same open dialogue can occur between neighbors. Site Plan Review is the lowest threshold group decision-making process we have at our disposal. It represents a minimal burden on those proposing to add ADUs and will provide an absolutely critical opportunity for neighbors to have input. Each neighborhood across the City has its own unique characteristics. They vary in density, housing type, and challenges. Site Plan Review is the right place to have a balanced discussion around proposals in a way that promotes both housing production and respect for the neighborhood.

The recent revisions to the State regulations make a Site Plan Review process with public engagement even more crucial. The removal of a minimum lot size, and the addition of the least restrictive dimensional controls, creates the opportunity for large buildings on small parcels. The expansion of these uses in dense neighborhoods warrants public engagement.

The inclusion of Site Plan Review remains something I am committed to as a requirement for any zoning language to be signed off on. I strongly encourage you to keep that in place for all proposed Accessory Dwelling Units. I cannot support a paper absent that provision or where it is applied to only a certain type of proposed ADU.

Thank you again for your hard work on this important matter.