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—For section.....Voices/Letters from readers
—Format.....LETTERS - Opinions - Letters to the Editor
—Dateline.....
—Article Number:.....42795

Notes from editor (not for publication):

Hi, Fhar — Sorry that our annual week off and production crises have delayed publication. I've changed tenses accordingly. This will go nicely this week with Laura Chapman's piece about compassion. And thanks for including the links. They will remain in the online version. —All the best and Happy New Year, Jeff

HEADLINE ELEMENTS:

####BEGIN HED####

Exclusionary zoning won't solve anything

####END HED####

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TEXT BODY:

####BEGIN TEXT####

Two years ago, as the Brattleboro Selectboard was considering a suite of changes to the town's land use regulations brought forward by the Planning Department, the board lauded those changes for being "[inclusionary and reduc\[ing\] barriers to housing.](#)"

9 Now, in response to the housing crisis becoming even
10 more dire, the board has approved a transparently exclusionary
11 interim zoning regulation that will hinder the work of social
12 service groups' efforts to address that same housing crisis
13 (alongside the opioid crisis, the affordability crisis, and the crisis
14 of the [transfer of \\$79 trillion in wealth from the bottom 90% to](#)
15 [the top 1%](#)).

16 The *Reformer* printed a [letter](#) by Rev. Ralph W. Howe
17 rightly pointing out how exclusionary zoning — rendered
18 constitutional by the Supreme Court in 1926 — has historically
19 been used to further systemic racism and classism in this country.
20 It bears noting that the [rationale](#) used by those conservative
21 justices to rule against otherwise sacrosanct common-law private
22 property rights was that the state has a right to regulate land use
23 as a part of its inherent “police power.”

24 However, the fact remains that we can't police our way
25 out of the problems presented by poverty, homelessness, and
26 substance-use disorder, whether it is through the Police
27 Department, the Planning Department, or the Development
28 Review Board.

29 Until the Selectboard can develop the political will to
30 shift focus and resources away from these [expensive](#),
31 exclusionary, and [counterproductive](#) strategies and toward
32 actually helping address these crises, it might at least stand aside
33 and allow those working to address those crises — and rendering
34 aid and comfort to those suffering the most from them — to do so
35 without harassment.

####END TEXT####

BIO/COATTAIL:

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LAST ISSUE IN WHICH THIS FILE CAN BE RUN:

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####BEGIN MAXISSUE####

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LINKS:

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####BEGIN LINKS####

####END LINKS####

VIDEO:

39

####BEGIN VIDEO####

####END VIDEO####

LOGLINE (SOCIAL MEDIA):

40

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####END LOGLINE####