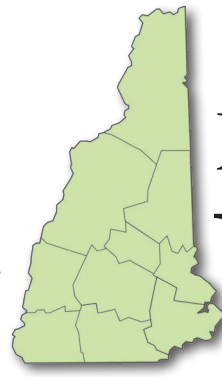


'Accessory Dwelling Unit' bills threaten local control of zoning

LESS THAN a century ago, an individual who possessed a "cult of personality" rose to power and attempted to attain his idealistic vision of a communist utopia. During his decades reign of terror, Chairman Mao Zedong decided that a top-down, central planning model was superior to what had been local-control.



Rep. Len Turcotte



NEW HAMPSHIRE VOICES

Upon taking power, Mao dictated that all private land would become that of the state. Then, during the Great Leap Forward (which was anything but), Mao sent his "expert" cadres (closely associated activist zealots) from Beijing, who had never farmed a day in their lives, out into the countryside hundreds and thousands of miles away. Their mission was to teach the farmers how to farm more productively on the newly created communes.

Over the next four years, somewhere between 30 to 50 million of China's population starved to death before Mao reversed course back to local control, again allowing farmers to own and work their land once again.

Why have I recounted history from

60 years ago? It's an analogy for today because we have individuals both in and out of elected office in our state with Mao's elitist mindset; people who believe they (like Mao and his cadres) know better than municipalities and their citizens what is best regarding land ownership and the zoning.

Some on the right have teamed with progressives on the left and are pushing these Communist-like top-down policies contained in HB 1291 and HB 1399. These two bills would force municipalities to permit additional ADUs and multi-family rental units on land that is currently zoned for single-family residences.

Much like Mao unilaterally decided to collectivize every farmer's land, this group of individuals believe they should mandate onto every municipality their idealistic vision of a land-use utopia. In the process, they will take from the majority of property owners their existing property rights, all in the guise of gaining property rights they believe they are owed for the benefit of themselves and their special-interest backers.

Allowing legislation to become law that mandates zoning from central planners will set an extremely dangerous precedent going forward for New Hampshire.

What is really striking, is that many of our present-day "cadres" pushing these elitist ideas do not even own property themselves, yet somehow believe they have the wisdom to decide for everyone else how best property should be allocated and zoned.

In New Hampshire, local control has been the bedrock of land ownership and use way before anyone reading this op-ed was even alive. Granite Staters would never approve of one-size-fits-all mandates on zoning forced upon us by federal authorities. Yet, municipalities are expected to quietly accede to socialist zoning dictates at the state level?

Zoning changes have always been by amendment using the local warrant article process. Those in the municipalities know what is best for their municipalities (like farmers know how to farm).

Should these top-down legislative mandates pass, municipalities will wake up in 5 or 10 years to a completely changed residential landscape due to the large increase in rental units. It will be a subtle and incremental change, one that won't be able to be reversed.

As the character of neighborhoods changes, so will the inevitable increase in property taxes to subsidize increased rental properties that owners will pay little on in property taxes in relation to the increases in municipal services and school budgets.

HB1291 and HB1399 are the two most potentially destructive bills I have witnessed in my eight years as a state representative. Both are currently in the Senate and both need to have a stake driven through their hearts.

It is imperative that you make your voice known very soon before it is too late. If they pass and the governor signs them, say goodbye to single-family neighborhoods as you'll have no say in the transformation. You have been warned.

Rep. Len Turcotte (R-Barrington) serves as chairman of the House Municipal and County Government Committee and served on the Labor Committee for three terms.

New Hampshire Voices

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Letter

Immigration peril hype isn't backed by the facts

To the Editor: The volume of unadulterated hogwash that oozes onto the New Hampshire Union Leader's letters to the

editor page never ceases to amaze me.

The latest example comes from Merrimack who claims that President Joe Biden has opened our borders to illegal immigrants because they vote

for Democrats.

Interesting theory, except for one flaw: illegal immigrants can't vote in federal elections. Nor does any state allow noncitizens to vote.

JACK CHEEVERS
East Hampstead

"There Is Nothing So Powerful As Truth" — Daniel Webster

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MALLARD FILLMORE

By Bruce Tinsley

