

**Town of Barrington, RI, Resolution in Support of 2026 House Bill 8015 Defining Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as Affordable Housing in Municipalities with No Minimum Lot Size for ADUs**

WHEREAS, the State Rhode Island's Low and Moderate Income Housing Act (RIGL 45-53) sets a 10 percent affordable housing goal for municipalities, based on the number of year-round units within each community; and,

WHEREAS, to qualify as affordable, housing units must be deed-restricted as affordable for at least 30 years, receive a subsidy, and have a monitoring agreement in place to ensure long-term affordability is maintained; and,

WHEREAS, the State enacted legislation in 2024 authorizing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) by right throughout the State, including on lots that are 20,000 square feet and larger; and,

WHEREAS, the 2024 legislation includes provisions that ensure new ADUs are an affordable housing option, including but not limited to: the ADU must be on a lot with an owner-occupied principal residential unit; a maximum of 900 square feet for a one-bedroom and 1,200 square feet for a two-bedroom ADU; and a prohibition on using the ADU as a short-term rental unit; and,

WHEREAS, for communities with limited remaining buildable land such as Barrington, ADUs provide an opportunity for homeowners to create a new unit utilizing existing infrastructure without creating new house lots in areas that may not be suitable for new development; and,

WHEREAS, according to Housing Works RI, ADUs are an effective way to utilize the existing housing stock available to meet the needs of Rhode Island's growing senior population, who would otherwise likely have to move to a more affordable community; and

WHEREAS, ADUs are more sustainable than traditional, larger single-family homes, requiring less energy and fewer resources to build and maintain; and,

WHEREAS, on July 28, 2025, the Barrington Town Council approved zoning ordinance amendments allowing ADUs by right on lots without a minimum lot area requirement; and,

WHEREAS, the elimination of the lot area minimum significantly expands opportunities to create ADUs by right, as a large majority of lots in town, approximately 71 percent out of more than 6,000 residentially zoned parcels are smaller than 20,000 in lot area; and,

WHEREAS, the Town's accessory dwelling unit affordable housing strategy has not produced any affordable housing units that qualify under the current State definition, likely due to the requirements of a 30-year deed restriction and a monitoring agent; and,

WHEREAS, House Bill 8015 would further refine the State's definition of affordable housing to include ADUs that function as long-term rentals in municipalities that haven't set minimum lot size restrictions, such as Barrington.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Barrington supports passage by the RI General Assembly of House Bill 8015 as an effective option for communities to make progress toward the 10 percent affordable housing goal by promoting the construction of ADUs by right.

Adopted April 6, 2026, by the Barrington Town Council



Braxton Cloutier, Town Council President



Attest: Stephanie Bernardo, CMC, Town Clerk