

Correspondence received by the Concord Select Board
Week Ending – November 18, 2024

1. Jennie Garofalo – 51 Coolidge Road
2. Phyllis DiMarzio – 12 Concord Greene
3. Phil Swain - 114 Pine Hill Lane
4. Gwen Acton – 62 Elm Street
5. Susan Maciorowski – 26 Concord Greene Unit 4
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Dear Members of the Town of Concord Select Board,

As a follow-up to my email to you on October 22nd, it is my understanding that the Select Board declined to conduct a study on instating the RTE tax despite receiving countless objections and grievances from Concord townspeople. In addition, at the September forum opponents AND proponents of the RTE voiced support for such a study and yet you still did not act. So let me get this straight, you elected to undergo a thorough, lengthy, and official examination around the use of clickers in town meetings, but you do not feel inclined to apply at least the same treatment to a tax policy that will raise the taxes for thousands of Concord citizens by THOUSANDS of dollars year over year?! Further, it is also my understanding that the town of Lexington, our neighbor in all things since even before the founding of our country, conducted a 90-page study on the RTE and ultimately rejected it. Yet in Concord, just five citizens put it in motion without even so much as a fair study?! It is a real shame that you do not represent the entire community when that is what each of you was elected to do.

Respectfully,

Jennie Garofalo

51 Coolidge Road

Dear Select Board Members, As Senior Citizen tax paying residents at Concord Greene, we financially support the Concord School System. Since we will never have children attending these schools, we feel it is a necessary consideration to offer tax relief to us.

The Tax Exemption seems to be the answer.

Thank you,

Phyllis DiMarzio

12 Concord Greene Resident

To the Concord Select Board and Concord Public Celebrations Committee

After attending (but not being able to hear much of) the Civil War monument program in Monument Square this weekend (and the events for the Privilial Congress in October, and the Lafayette event in September), I suggest that the appropriate entity in the town buy a modern, high quality, PA system (with a mike that works, amplifier, and speakers) for the town to use all the time, but especially at the 250th events.

One of the problems is the mike in the current town system; unless the speaker directs their talk directly and closely into the mike, it seems the PA system does not pick it up. I don't think it is practical just to instruct all speakers to speak directly into the mike; instead, we should have one that is easy for anyone to use. At least buy a high quality, easy to use mike. The speakers could probably use an upgrade, too.

I understand that 250th parade sub-committee is planning to rent a high quality system for the parade next April 19. But even that would not solve the problem for other 250th events, or other town public events after that.

Perhaps we could use the unspent ARPA funds, or Concord 250 Executive Committee funds, or Concord 250 Corp. funds. I don't think it would be that expensive.

I will follow up with the Select Board and Public Celebrations when I get a chance. But I wanted to get this on your radar screens.

Phil Swain

114 Pine Hill Lane

Concord, MA 01742

November 17, 2024

To the Select Board:

The Residential Tax Exemption (RTE) was adopted last year with the goal of improving affordability in Concord. Unfortunately, the reality is that the RTE makes the town less affordable for those who are most vulnerable.

Why? Because the RTE shifts tax burdens onto rental units which tend to be occupied by those with lower incomes. To understand the impact of the RTE, consider this: homeowners of \$1.5 million dollar homes are being subsidized by half-million dollar rental units.

While we might wish that landlords wouldn't pass these tax increases on to tenants, 80-90% of increases are eventually passed on to tenants according to research from the MIT Center for Real Estate. Further, I have talked with two landlords who said they will need to pass on increases to their tenants.

Some supporters of the RTE have called it a "progressive" tax. However, this is based on hope and speculation, and Concord never conducted a study to confirm this.

When studies have been conducted – one by the town of Lexington and one by the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center – they have concluded that the RTE is a "regressive" tax because it shifts taxes to rental units. The Lexington study concluded that the RTE *"may appear to be progressive when considering only owner-occupied single family homes, when considering all types of residential properties and their occupants, it is not progressive."*

While the RTE was well-intentioned, it not only fails to accomplish the town's goals of improving affordability and diversity, but it is a regressive tax that increases the tax burden on rental units which house the town's most vulnerable population.

Clearly it would be unconscionable to reinstate the RTE this year and Concord must find better solutions.

Best,
--Gwen Acton
Elm Street, Concord

Dear Ms. Fountain,

I wish to express to you and the Concord select board my support for the continuation of Concord's Residential Tax Exemption (RTE).

Thank you so much.

Regards,

Susan M. Maciorowski

26 CONCORD GREENE Unit 4

Concord, MA. 01742

Please extend the RTE for 2025 year. It makes a huge difference for those of us who are on fixed incomes.

Thank You,

R. Mike Ewing

2 Concord Greene 4

Concord