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Proposal to subsidize the costs of retrofitting rental housing units in Amherst: Goals: (1) to increase the efficiency of their operation, (2) to improve the air quality, (3) to increase the comfort level of residents, and (4) to reduce the costs to both renters and landlords. The second and third changes would also have the benefit of improving resident health.

The cost of retrofitting would probably be around \$10k per unit, including weatherization and replacement of present technology with air source, heat pump technology. The primary targets of opportunity are probably older buildings in which the landlord pays the costs of central heating. According to my brief conversation with Rob Morra, there is probably more need out there than we have money to subsidize.

Use of ARPA funding. The Governor has indicated that he believes 20% of State ARPA funds should be directed to housing. I think that is a reasonable goal for the Town of Amherst, as well. However, there are other sources of funding to substantially leverage the Town's ARPA investment. If we work with the Center for EcoTechnology (CET), they will help to arrange matching funds from Eversource, which is also committed to these changes and is reportedly falling behind their own implementation goals.

CET would also work with the Town and landlords to evaluate the ratio of investment to savings. It would do pre-installation energy audits, as well as post-audits. They could work with landlords to identify appropriate contractors to undertake the work, and with the Town to develop a method for a fair allocation of funds. It would likely not be restricted to the larger landlords.

I am assuming that funds from Eversource and the Town's ARPA share would largely finance the capital costs of these investments. Landlords would be expected to reduce rents and to make tenants responsible for individual electric utility payments, over which they would now gain direct control. In addition, we could negotiate an increased number of affordable units to make more housing affordable.

There will likely be other sources for financing this program, both short term and longer term. The ARPA funds will give us a significant head start on a program that will substantially help the Town to meet its climate change goals, as articulated recently by the ECAC in the CAARP presented to Town Council. Since more than half of the residents of the Town are renters, many of whom are paying more than 30% of their income on housing, this should provide a substantial benefit to many citizens, not only those with low incomes.