

Landlord / Tenant Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

Meeting was held on August 12, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at the Village Hall, Room 1301.
Present: Mayor Larry Hartwig, Officer Maria Hernandez of the Addison Police Department, Clerk Mary Heneghan of the Addison Police Department and eight landlords.

I. Welcome & Introductions

- Mayor Hartwig welcomed the attendees and thanked them for their participation.
- All landlords introduced themselves and their property address.

II. Questions / Discussion

The Mayor began by asking the landlords what some of their biggest challenges are. Listed are the key issues discussed:

- All of the landlords present were concerned about the number of vacant units at their rental properties. They attributed this to the struggling economy and its impact on jobs and income levels.
- The Mayor asked the group how they attract their tenants, which brought up the issue of the quality of tenants. It was mentioned how the quality of tenants looking to rent apartments is very low, and it keeps getting lower and lower (i.e., no one wants to give a security deposit; prospective tenants have very poor credit). The Mayor asked where these tenants go once they are turned away, and the landlords all agreed that they go to rental properties where the landlords do not care who they rent to and are less restrictive.
- The focus then turned to the quality of the neighborhoods and the town. It was brought up by the landlords how it is very difficult to attract quality tenants when the properties around them are in foreclosure and not being properly taken care of. The Mayor stressed that the Village does not want to be in the business of owning properties. He also mentioned that the Village has been going onto some properties and cleaning them up a bit on the outside and then charging the bank that owns the property. Also, the Village has been successful in getting some money back from outsourcing lawn maintenance by having owners pay these costs before a transfer stamp is issued.
- The group wants to see a beautification of Addison and hopes that if one property owner keeps his property respectable looking then hopefully others will follow their lead. However, if surrounding buildings are not taken care of, especially those in foreclosure, the buildings that are taken care of will not get quality tenants. The Mayor admitted that this is a challenge facing our town.
- The group asked the Mayor what his biggest grievance was of the landlords. His response was the inconsistencies among the landlords, how some of them

just want an easy way to make money and are not familiar with the proper ways to manage the property. He stated that the goal of the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program is to improve the quality of life in Addison and encourage owners to take ownership of their properties, keep them clean, and rent to quality tenants.

- The landlords also commented that they would like Community Development to focus more on inspecting the outside of the property, rather than charging them for minor violations inside the units. They suggested that Community Development take a more friendly approach with the property owners and consider calling them when they notice a violation on the outside of the building, give them some time to fix the problem, and fine them only if the problem is not taken care of within that time frame. They believe that there seems to be an incentive for inspectors to find something wrong.

III. Conclusion

- The Mayor agreed with the concerns of the landlords and said that this is why he would like to get the Commission working on these issues.
- The big issue in Addison is upgrading the quality of the tenants in the rental properties. He also agreed with having the inspectors focus more on the exteriors of the rental properties.
- The Mayor stated that these issues will not be fixed overnight, that we need to be patient and continue to work together.
- The Mayor thanked everyone for their attendance and participation and said that he would be in contact in the near future with additional information.
- The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.