

City of West St. Paul
Public Safety Committee Meeting
August 22, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

Those in attendance: Clpn. Ed Iago, Clpn. Anthony Fernandez, Clpn. Bob Pace, Police Laura Vaughan (left early at 5:50 p.m.) and Jesse Mettner arrived around 5:50 p.m., Assistant Community Development Director Ben Boike, and Attorney Korine Land.

Clpn. Iago opened the meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Clpn. Iago reviewed the previous notes from the last meeting.

Comments:

- Page 1 – no comments.
- Page 2 – no comments.
- Page 3, item 4(a) – Inspection requirements are broken down by the number of units. Clpn. Pace wanted to make the inspection rules the same for everyone. Attorney Land said the thought was, as far as multi-family only a ¼ of the units are inspected annually, while owners with 1-3 units are inspected every 3 years. Clpn. Iago said if any person who has 1 to 3 units has had violations, this should move them into a new category for requiring more frequent inspections. Boike said we could come up with a scoring process. Land said would it have to be an unresolved code violation. Clpn. Iago said any notice is considered a code violation. Clpn. Fernandez said that seems heavy-handed. Clpn. Pace agrees with Fernandez for a first time violation that is corrected, no harsher inspection schedule should be required. Fernandez and Pace agreed that if it were a repeat offender, that is what more frequent inspections would be for; a habitual offender, or if it was not corrected, that would be a violation. Yes – an uncorrected code violation (specifically violations of the Maintenance Standards listed in Section 150.040 (A)(1), (2), (3), (4), (6) or (7)) or 2 or more notices that puts you into the more frequent inspection process. It was decided that Police calls will not be part of the process. Discussion regarding a number of calls ensued. There were questions raised about using the same criteria to tie this into a higher fee? It was suggested that maybe we use the administration citations tool for a license fee increase. Fernandez said the rating system has worked in St. Paul.
- Page 4, item i. - notification requirements for public hearings. Land said look at page 5. There is a provision that the notice must be issued 7 days prior to the meeting. All in favor.
- Page 5, item j – who checks to see if the license is posted? Boike said Sabrina Gorr will do this.
- Page 6 - repeat nuisance calls. The word calendar had been removed years ago and instead, a 12-month rolling calendar is used to determine the number of calls. Officer Mettner

indicated that the ordinance has always been interpreted to mean that there needed to be a certain number of calls to the same unit. Every morning Mettner said he and Vaughan review the previous day's calls. Mettner said they have been sending letters to owners or managers who have multiple calls. Land said that ordinance does not specify "per unit" basis and perhaps there should be a different number for calls to a complex based on the number of units in that complex.

- Public nuisance exception – question regarding language. Should this be defined better? Land believes the language is flexible and sufficient.
- It was recommended that we not dictate a criminal history or tenant screening process. Question is to determine the right number for violations and complaint calls before we take action. We need to get problem landlords to understand that they need to have a clean building. The ultimate tool is to take action on their license. A license is not a right – it is a privilege.
- Clpn. Iago wondered how the Council can be better informed. Mettner said his spreadsheet is updated weekly and could be distributed monthly. Boike said his dept. uses this information for their license reviews. Various options were discussed as to how to bring the information to the Council; quarterly, monthly, work sessions, Ryan's weekly reports, but no consensus was reached.
- There was general discussion about the benefits of Administrative Citations vs. Repeat Nuisance Service fees. Although both are options, there may be circumstances when one is more beneficial than the other. Repeat Nuisance Service Fees are significantly less than Administrative Citations.

Clpn. Iago asked everyone to review Attorney Land's proposed ordinance amendments prior to the next meeting and be prepared to comment on it. He suggested the next meeting be scheduled after Clpn. Pace returns from his trip on Sept. 20.

Meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

City of West St. Paul
Public Works Committee