

ITEM NO. D TO THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE PEORIA, ILLINOIS, IN COUNCIL ASSEMBLED YOUR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE to whom was referred a POLICY DISCUSSION/COUNCIL WORKSHOP regarding the Preliminary Proposals Regarding Rental Registration, Rental Inspections, and Related Landlord/Tenant Relations, Status Report #1.

A Policy Discussion/Council Workshop was held on Tuesday, November 1, 1994, at City Hall, Council Chambers, 419 Fulton Street, Peoria, Illinois, at 7:26 P.M., with Mayor James A. Maloof presiding.

ROLL CALL

Roll call showed the following Council Members present: Gibson, Glover, Koehler, Kouri, LeDoux, Ransburg, Sandberg, Spears, Unes, Mayor Maloof - 10; Absent: Bohannon - 1.

Others present: City Manager Peter Korn; City Clerk Mary Haynes; Corporation Counsel Glenn Collier; Director of Planning and Growth Management Wayne Anthony; Assistant Corporation Counsel Cliff Mitchell; Assistant Director of Planning and Growth Management Patricia Landes; Kristie Evers of the City Clerk's Office; interested citizens and members of the media.

Rental Registration, Rental Inspections, and Related Landlord/Tenant Relations, Status Report #1

Mr. Glenn Collier, Corporation Counsel, stated regarding the issue of conflict of interest, that according to the Attorney General's Office, the members of the Council who were landlords would be allowed to participate in the discussion and vote, because this issue was broad enough not to raise the conflict of interest issue. He said his previous opinion was based on a 1993 opinion from the Attorney General's Office.

Ms. Patricia Landes, Assistant Director of Planning and Growth Management, gave a brief overview of the background regarding landlord/tenant issues. She reviewed Status Report #1 on Rental Registration, Rental Inspections, and Landlord/Tenant Relations. She pointed out two significant points of the proposed rental registration ordinance regarded language to assist in the code compliance process and the notice process.

Councilman Unes left the Council Chambers at 7:45 P.M.

Mayor Maloof expressed concern regarding the provision in the proposed rental registration ordinance which would require all rental property owners living outside the County of Peoria, including responsible owners, to identify a local agent.

Ms. Landes stated there would be further discussion and consideration regarding this provision.

Councilman Sandberg expressed concerned regarding the provision that would waive the registration fee for the Peoria Housing Authority (PHA). He stated he believed it would be inconsistent to require other housing entities, which were similar to the PHA, to pay the registration fees.

Councilman Sandberg suggested that the registration process be staggered to balance the workload for the City Staff.

Councilman Sandberg suggested the dynamics of student housing, especially off-campus student housing, be more fully integrated into the registration process.

Councilman Gibson stated she agreed with Councilman Sandberg regarding student housing. She pointed out the proposed rental registration ordinance included a provision regarding the maximum number of occupants permitted in each dwelling unit. She stated she believed that provision to be absolutely essential.

Councilman Glover stated he had reservations regarding the provision which would require all rental property owners living outside the County of Peoria to identify a local agent. He said he believed it would be cumbersome to require landlords living in the Tri-county area to identify a local agent.

In discussion regarding the Rental Inspection Program proposal, Councilman Glover expressed concern regarding the higher fee imposed for Single-Family units over Multi-Family units. He stated he had difficulty accepting the differentiation, and he did not believe he could support that portion of the proposal. He suggested the proposed fee assessment be reevaluated in a more equitable manner.

Councilman Koehler suggested the neighborhood enhancement teams be included in the inspection process.

Councilman Koehler expressed concern regarding the proposed inspection cycle. He stated he believed the proposed cycle penalized the owners of structures in older areas. He suggested all property inspections be based on the same cycle.

In discussion regarding the proposed inspection cycle, Ms. Landes stated the issue of how and if the inspection cycle should be adjusted regarding properties which pass code inspections and those which fail to pass inspections would be taken into consideration in the drafting of the inspection ordinance.

Councilman Sandberg pointed out regarding the proposed date of 1969, which was used in the proposed inspection cycle, that the Fire Codes used the date 1961 as a basis. He suggested there be a coordination established between the two dates, whether it should be 1961 or 1969.

In discussion with Councilman Spears regarding schedules, Ms. Landes stated a four-month registration cycle schedule was being considered, and the inspection cycle schedule would be based upon the cycle Council eventually approved.

Councilman Spears suggested a strategy be established within the inspection process to manage requests from landlords for inspections.

In discussion regarding the proposed inspection cycle, Ms. Landes pointed out the 1995 budget proposal for the Rental Inspection Program was based on the proposed three-year and ten-year cycle. She said she would report back with a possible alternative inspection schedule.

Councilman Koehler suggested a pilot program be developed to target neighborhoods most at risk for destabilization, such as the East and Center Bluffs, to limit the number of registrations permitted. He stated that by putting a cap on the market, landlords would have to compete for those available spots on the basis of having good, quality units which were in compliance.

Councilman Koehler also suggested the City consider setting up a risk pool, perhaps involving the private insurance market, in order to help landlords who suffer losses from tenant damage in risk neighborhoods.

Councilman Koehler further suggested a mandatory arbitration system be developed, on a pilot basis, to deal with tenant/landlord, code inspection, and neighborhood issues.

Ms. Landes briefly discussed the City of Milwaukee Landlord Training Program, and she suggested this program be used as a model for developing a landlord training program in Peoria. She also suggested an ad hoc committee be established to address landlord, tenant, and neighborhood concerns.

Councilman Sandberg questioned if landlords could be given contractual freedoms, which could be enforced by City programs, to limit potential tenant problems. He stated he believed it was important for the City to give support to the positive, responsible landlords in order to eliminate tenant problems.

Ms. Landes stated the Champaign/Urbana Landlord/Tenant Relations Ordinance, State Statutes, and other ordinances geared to help responsible landlords and responsible tenants would be taken into consideration in the development of City ordinances and programs.

Councilman Glover suggested perhaps property owners who were too physically or mentally incapacitated to manage their property should also be required to name a local agent.

Councilman Koehler stated he believed there should also be a tenant training program established. He suggested the City offer an incentive for landlord and tenants who both go through a training program. He said regarding an arbitration system, the City could perhaps not only ask for monetary damages from problem tenants, but could require tenants to go through a training program.

Councilman Koehler commended the Staff for their efforts, and he expressed his support for the proposed programs.

Councilman Ransburg complimented the Staff and the Public Safety and Social Responsibility Committee for their efforts, and he stated he supported the proposed programs.

Councilman Koehler suggested the proposed ad hoc committee be limited to nine people.


Councilman Gibson, Chairman of the Public Safety and Social Responsibility Committee, thanked Mr. Wayne Anthony, Director of Planning and Growth Management; Ms. Landes; and the members of Public Safety and Social Responsibility Committee for their efforts. She stated she agreed with idea of establishing an ad hoc committee, and she suggested that Staff proceed along those lines. She further suggested Staff take into consideration the suggestions given by Council and proceed as outlined.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Koehler moved to adjourn the Policy Session; seconded by Councilman LeDoux.

Approved by viva voce vote.

The Policy Session was adjourned at 8:40 P.M.



Mary L. Haynes, CM/AAE, City Clerk
City of Peoria, Illinois

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