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November 20, 2018

Common Council
Safety and Development Committee
West Allis, WI

RE: Rental Inspection Program

Dear Committee Members,

Almost two years ago, the topic of rental inspections was brought up in committee and discussed. I believe the Safety and Development Committee agreed that a limited program like this could be beneficial to tenants in the city, but they wanted to see a solid plan before moving forward with it to make sure it was not designed to be too difficult or bureaucratic for the property owner. Please see my earlier communication attached to this one which outlined many of the benefits of this type of program. Since that time, the State of Wisconsin passed a new law pertaining to rental inspection programs, limiting their scope and regulations. Earlier this year, Alderman Euteneier, Mayor Devine, and I met to discuss how a program like this would work in West Allis. We developed the following outline for a pilot program to be discussed and possibly tested in 2019. Below are the specifics of that program for discussions.

What: This is a pilot rental inspection program for a targeted area in the City of West Allis for 2019 only at this time. We would perform rental inspections on multi-family dwellings (3-units or more) to a set checklist of issues on the exterior and interior of the building and living units.

Where: The pilot program area would be in the 2019 CDBG area, which is between Greenfield Avenue, 76th Street, National Avenue, and 84th Street. There are approximately 20 multi-family dwellings in that area.

When: The pilot program would be inspected over the summer of 2019.

Who: The pilot program will be administered by the Department of Building Inspection and Neighborhood Services (BINS), in cooperation with the Fire Department and potentially several other city departments. The inspections would be coordinated with the annual Fire Department inspection of all commercial buildings.

How: BINS will have two inspectors performing proactive property maintenance inspections in this area in the spring and summer of 2019 as part of the CDBG program. When they come across a rental property, they will also perform an interior inspection of the building. Prior to the inspection, a date and time will be scheduled with the property owner so the building and rental units can be accessed. The owner will also receive an advanced copy of the inspection checklist that will be used by inspection staff to evaluate the building. After the inspection, the property owner will receive a report based on the checklist, and any corrective measures that will need to be done. The report will outline minor and major issues to be addressed. The timeline for correction will be based on the severity of the issue. Only major issues will need to be addressed with a follow up inspection after corrected. There will be no inspection or re-inspection fees for these test pilot properties at this time.

This is a pilot program only for one season in a small target area. The results of the inspections in this area will be used to gauge the need for this program to be continued and/or expanded to other test areas in the city. Because BINS staff will already be in this targeted area of the city performing proactive inspections, there will be minimal disruption to their normal tasks, hence the ability to not charge additional fees for the inspections. Also, since we will be coordinating our inspections with the Fire Department's annual inspection, the inconvenience to the property owner should be minimized.

I will be available for your questions or comments at any time.

Sincerely,



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