

Housing Policy Workgroup Meeting Sixty Day Report

August 26 – September 22, 2010

During the month of September 2010, the Housing Policy Workgroup was largely focused on the issues regarding single-family rental units. The group is working to create an implementation plan and cost structure to support the work.

Meeting #4 – September 8, 2010

At meeting #4 the group began discussions around single-family rental units. After a thoughtful dialogue, the group approved a statement agreeing to the importance of single-family rental inspections and certifications. A great deal of research was submitted to the group portraying what other cities were doing as it relates to rental inspections. It became clear that other cities do not separate out the different types of rental units, but inspect all units within their jurisdiction and utilize some sort of fee structure to pay for the work.

The group also discussed possible implementation strategies and budget scenarios. A three phase pilot project, over the course of three years, was found to have consensus. The targeted implementation would start with focusing upon the blocks with the highest ratio of complaints and concentration of single-family rental units. Over the course of three years, all single-family rental units would be certified. A phased-in approach demands less up-front costs and the ability to evaluate the program as it is implemented.

Meeting #5 – September 22, 2010

The City submitted revised budget numbers to the group to better inform future discussions. The group participated in a broad conversation regarding budgetary issues and possible cost structures to support inspections. Issues raised and discussed include: the appropriateness of using fees to support inspections, possibility of using other revenue streams, effects that the policy could have on affordable housing, historic fluctuations in rent prices, evaluating the program as it starts, and the possibility of contracting out inspections. No decisions were made at this meeting, but conversations took place that addressed these important issues.

Upcoming

The following two meetings will be focused on finishing up the discussion on single-family rental inspections and certifications, along with addressing vacant properties. The next report will be the final document submitted to the City Commission and City Manager outlining policy recommendations related to inspections and vacant properties.