

Bryant, Shellie

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To: City Council
Subject: Form submission from: Write a Letter to Council
Attachments: fall_2019_landlord_lisencing_consultation_report_.docx

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Submitted values are:

Date Sunday, January 26, 2020

To His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

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Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable) Pleasant Hill Community Association

Subject in Response to 8.1.4: A Report on Landlord accountability and Safe and adequate Housing

Meeting (if known) City Council

Comments

Please find attached the voices of our community . We are concerned with protecting our city's vulnerable tenants and ensuring that safe and adequate housing is accessible and protected for all!

Thank you

Attachments

[fall_2019_landlord_lisencing_consultation_report_.docx](#)

The results of this submission may be viewed at:

<https://www.saskatoon.ca/node/398/submission/362415>

2019 Fall Clean-Up Report on Landlord Accountability and Safe and Adequate Housing

October 2019

Prepared by Jennifer Altenberg, Jessica McNab, Sharon Marsicano, Shane Partridge, Lynn Thompson,

The Pleasant Hill Community has spent much of 2018 and 2019 discussing and giving feedback around rental property licensing and the problematics around unsafe rental prosperities in Pleasant Hill. After being dissatisfied with the consultation process and the sliding scale rubric that was presented by the City of Saskatoon's Administration. PHCA took it upon themselves to conduct their own research process to adequately reflect the residents and community voice of those who live and love Pleasant Hill.

PHCA did not feel that a sliding scale assessment tool was appropriate to address the needs in our community. Our community members and renters are dealing with landlords that are doing the bare minimum for their tenants due to their struggles with poverty and mental health. PHCA feels very strongly that it is in an oppressive nature that the City suggests, "if there is going to be a licensing program that it will fall back onto the renters and increase rent." **PHCA Consultation Meeting with City of Saskatoon Team 2019.** PHCA also identified problematics of the Licencing Program to only apply to multi-unit properties. There are many single unit rental properties that need to be addressed within Pleasant Hill.

Considering this, PHCA conducted a survey at our Community Clean-up in the Fall of 2019. Pleasant Hill follows respectful and reciprocal research methodologies that are guided by our community elders, residents and youth. As an Association, we know our community members are apathic to consultations processes as we have been overly researched and consulted and left with little actionable results that can improve our living conditions in a short time period. One of the ways that we engaged in dialog is by meeting people where they are at. The morning of our clean up, cultural advisors and youth, spent the morning bundling tobacco ties so we could offer them to our community before we asked them our questions about Landlords relationships and rental experiences.

We spoke with our most targeted community members from Pleasant Hill, mothers, grandmothers, people displaced or in between homes, injection using community members, renters, home owners, and landlords who step up in our community and treat their tenants with respect and dignity. This process is the qualitative and quantitative data collection that should be used in order to comprise a report that is looking for action-based and dignified solutions to improve the landlord/renter relationships in Pleasant Hill and could very easily be applied within other communities across the City of Saskatoon.

- Make sure the homes and rental prosperities are fully secure. Windows and doors fixed, proper weather stripping, clean vents so there is no dust when the heat turns on, have all lightbulbs working, fire detectors should work, find ways to lower rent for tenants.
- Landlords need to sign a contract with The City, Social Services, and the police, and Health Inspectors to ensure their commitment to tenants and renters.
- Boarded up houses should be torn down after a certain amount of time. No letting houses stay boarded up for months, even years. 3 month seems like an adequate time to deal with the boarded-up housing issues. Hold people accountable. Give out fines or tear down the property on the landlord's expense.
- The rental market is too high. Rent keeps going up, in unsafe places to live. How is this possible.
- Landlords kick people out and make people homeless without dealing with the issues.
- Landlords that will meet with residents – get ride of drug houses and junkies on properties, we need to keep our kids safe.
- More affordable and safe housing
- Talk to tenants about living conditions, access to services, programs to help subsidize people for things like cleaning supplies, programs to help people clean up their properties, help get ride of rodents or bugs.
- I think landlords should be held more accountable. There is nothing to do this, we do not have safe houses to live in and no one listens to us when we ask for help.
- Coachroches, bedbugs and issues.
- Rent is too high x4
- If there is mice or rats, provide traps for free
- Need to be city policies and bylaws that mandate safe affordable housing
- Include youth voice, the City puts priority on River Landing, and reconciliation events – try to make everything look good for tourists. Makes us feel like we are not important. The core neighborhood always gets left behind. No one cares about real justice.
- KEEP US SAFE – We do not feel SAFE.
- The rental properties need to have better insulation in the walls, better electrical outputs.
- We need better housing for people with disabilities in Pleasant Hill.
- Lots of apartment rugs are moldy, the rugs need to be replaced in apartment buildings. They are making people sick.
- Health inspectors need to have higher standards and do proper checks. They let things slide and let people get away with things or feel bad about displacing gang members or addicts. There must be a better way.

- Black mold in rental properties need to be dealt with
- There needs to be a way to enforce or check up on landlords. They get away with way too much.
- Welcome a face to face meeting with these landlords that have a lot of complaints and bylaw violations to address the concerns.
- A lot of times when landlords come into your home to do checks, they make you feel bad while they are doing an inspection.
- The rental board has a lot of issues and it is hard for people struggling to advocate for themselves.
- Some landlords need to lose their properties and not be allowed to rent to people.
- If there is licensing there needs to be things in place to revoke the landlords.
- A lot of landlords do not care about their renters nor do they care about saskatoon. A lot do not even live in this province or even country.
- Some landlords pay people to burn their properties down to collect their insurance.
- They do not keep their properties clean because they don't care.
- We want to have our own people and community members inspecting, like they did in Riversdale years ago. There needs to be more Indigenous frontline workers so tenants and renters can feel like they have advocates and allies to help them navigate these systems. **WE WANT OPPURTUNITY TO CREATE JOBS FOR OUR COMMUNITY MEMBERS.**
- Have a face to face meeting with landlords and community members. This has never happened. Do people for SHIP even work or live in Pleasant Hill? Who advocates for us? We want a voice and a seat at these tables? When it comes to housing and rentals.
- Volunteers to go door to door, offer people tobacco, check in with them in a good way. We need to have people trained to do our own inspections from the community. With community.
- We need to give out smoke detectors.
- There is a lot of tension between landlords and renters. Renters are treated as less then. We are told you are on welfare, this is good enough. You should be happy you have a roof over your head. This is not okay.
- The alphabet district needs to be given proper street names, with role models from our community, and meaningful words that can reclaim our streets and dismantle the stigma it means to live in the hood.
- Community members know that landlords have paid people to burn down their rental properties so they can collect insurance.

Conclusion:

PHCA is extremely grateful to our community members for their honest and heartfelt answers to our posed questions.

We hope the City of Saskatoon will take our research and community responses forward in coming up with the best solutions to a landlord licencing program.

Furthermore, housing remains to be one of the greatest safety issues within our community. This is going to take creativity, proper duty to consult, innovative ways to engage and changed bylaws and policy, and a shift in who maintains power within renting properties and who is left to survive.

The time is now to deal with the housing crisis and rental property maintenance issues in Saskatoon, specifically Pleasant Hill!