



Crime/drug free rental ordinance workgroup meeting summary: Meeting #4, June 26, 2019, 6 - 8 PM

11 of 12 members in attendance

Facilitator: Cathy Bennett

Staff present: Michele Schnitker, Marney Olson, Ann Boettcher, Alicia Sojourner and Lieutenant Jon Parker

Review of meeting rules: A copy of the meeting rules were posted and Cathy reminded the workgroup of the rules.

Meadowbrook background: Lt. Parker gave an overview of how community policing and crime prevention were used to address the crime, nuisance, and disorderly issues at Meadowbrook to make the Meadowbrook community safer for all residents living there.

One workgroup member gave her personal example of living at Meadowbrook and how residents were notified about the crime free lease addendum. She also noted the relationship building with police that occurred at Meadowbrook.

Legal authority/challenge and ordinance amendments: The workgroup discussed the information that was shared by Marc related to legal challenges to the ordinance and the amendment to add an appeal process to the ordinance. Marc read some sections of the motion and noted the city engaged with landlords, not tenants. Marc and Karl discussed that the language from the ordinance, and other crime free ordinances, originates out of public housing which led to the group confirming they want to hear from other cities to compare ordinances and learn about any challenges they have faced.

One major issue some of the workgroup members had was that the ordinance was put in place to deal with bad landlords and rather than just dealing with those landlords the city adopted a wide ordinance. The lack of due process was discussed as was the difference between eviction and termination and what that can mean, both positively and negatively, for renters.

Common goal: Cathy reiterated the purpose of the workgroup and led a discussion on the common goal of the workgroup which resulted in the following comments:

- Fair to all parties
- Equal Housing Opportunity
- Safe communities (safe from crime, an engaged community)
- A policy that reflects St. Louis Park's overall vision/goals as a community

- Protect property and liberty interests of owners
- Support due process
- Proportionality – crime fits the punishment

The group also discussed that safe communities means different things to different people and that people who are housing unstable are more likely to be victims of crimes and need to feel safe in contacting emergency resources. Displacement and homelessness was also a concern.

Review of the ordinance: Cathy facilitated an in depth review of the sections of the ordinance.

Section 8-328. Crime free/drug free training:

Like about this section	Dislike about this section	Unintended consequences, suggested modifications or other comments
Valuable Seems reasonable Like this	Only required once - may be a benefit for continuing education whether required or offered	Continue to include fair housing. Include domestic violence and mental health

Section 8-331. Crime free/drug free and disorderly use lease requirements

(a)(1) Crime Free/Drug Free 1-5

Like about this section	Dislike about this section	Unintended consequences, suggested modifications or other comments
Ok with the resident who is the lease holder being held to these standards	Too broad of a reach. Concern about guest or “other person affiliated with the resident” and “near the premises” is overreaching. In #2, how do you prove intent? Feel #1 and 3 cover this. #3, problematic language with “will not permit the dwelling to be used for”. #5 Proportionality concerns – all level of crime treated the same from a petty misdemeanor to a felony.	Remove the person causing problems, not everyone in household. More due process is needed for tenants. General consensus that this section has too broad of a reach but no agreement yet on how to fix it.

(a)(2) Disorderly Use

Like about this section	Dislike about this section	Unintended consequences, suggested modifications or other comments
	No clarity on alcoholic beverages. Overreach – “Persons under residents control” No appeal process on these violations.	Nothing gives tenant notice until strike 3. How are the tenants informed? What if landlord drops the ball? Notice should be sent to both landlord and tenant.

Before adjourning Cathy discussed next steps and whether we should continue with the tenant/landlord 101 session next meeting since we ran out of time to review the ordinance in its entirety. Many participants felt the same comments would apply throughout the remainder of the ordinance, primarily regarding too broad of a reach throughout.

Next meeting: July 24th, 6:00 to 8:00 PM at City Hall in the council chambers.