

Renters' Subcommittee with the Board of Directors

Saturday, October 17, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

1. Call to order at 2:11pm
2. Announcements
 - a. Introductions were waived. Co-chairs Annie Bickerton and Tyler Laferriere were present as well as Stacy Shure, chair of PLUM committee.
 - b. Stacy Shure announced that the Westside Regional Alliance of Councils has some motions coming through that may be of interest and she would like to request input from the co-chairs. The meeting has been moved to accommodate WRAC chair Matt Wersinger and will now take place Third Monday at 6:30pm. Public comment is limited to one minute. Stacy has concerns about the lack of transparency in some recent changes to procedures.
3. Public Comment for Items NOT on This Agenda
 - a. Kalani Whittington asked about ballot propositions related to rent stabilization. Tyler commented that Prop 21 will allow rent control ordinances to be applied for buildings over 15 years old.
 - b. Kalani Whittington also asked about enforcement of the AirBNB ordinances. Stacy Shure stated that there is now an enforcement division to ensure that the ordinance is followed. Annie noted that the enforcement phone line is (213) 202-5464, 24/7 Complaint Hotline: (213) 267-7788 or emailing planning.home-sharing@lacity.org.
4. Reading and Approval of Minutes from previous meeting - September 19th, 2020
 - a. Waive approval; if anyone would like to listen to the audio recording it is posted to the website. Written minutes will be approved at the November meeting and co-chairs are working to edit video of the presentations given at the September meeting.
5. Unfinished Business and General Orders
 - a. 14.4. [POLICY][PLUM] MVCC Position Regarding Enforcement of Tenant Protections
 - i. Tyler shared the resource stayhousedla.org/tenant_rights which outlines what renters must do in order to follow the pandemic tenant protection ordinances. Tenants must provide written notice to their landlords (and should document this communication) in order to receive eviction protection under this ordinance.

- ii. The HCID website has a form tenants should fill out to document.
Link here:
<https://dcba.lacounty.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Self-Certification-4.21.20.pdf>
 - iii. Landlords were required by law to serve tenants notice of their rights; if any residents have not received this notice they should report it to the city.
 - iv. The first date landlords can file small claims court complaints against tenants starting May 1st.
 - v. Stacy and Tyler noted that Stay Housed LA is also providing workshops and trainings for people who want to get educated on tenants rights for themselves or to help their neighbors.
 - vi. Stacy noted that Eviction Defense Network is offering workshops that can be accessed via Facebook at
<https://www.facebook.com/evictiondefensenetwork/events/>
 - vii. Stacy noted that Elliot Rosenberger occasionally offers workshops with the LA Tenants Union or the Coalition for Economic Survival, and that Basta also offers pro bono legal support and education. Kalani asked whether Inner City Law Center and Bet Tzedek who also provide legal support to low-income renters. Stacy noted that those organizations did a horrible job with renters on Mitchell avenue in Mar Vista.
 - viii. Stacy and Kalani discussed the increasing vacancy rate increasing in Los Angeles but it does not seem that rents are being lowered significantly. Ashley noted that the Vantage building has not lowered rent. Kalani stated that the foreign investors have cash flow to carry the vacancy rates. Tyler noted that the vacancy tax item further in the agenda allows more time to discuss.
 - ix. Ashley stated that her rent was increased during. Stacy stated that rent increases were frozen during a temporary ordinance, and that Ashley should check HCID.
 - x. Stacy noted that another helpful website that has multiple tenant resources is: <https://www.1degree.org/>
- b. 14.5 [POLICY][PLUM] MVCC Position Regarding Anti-Harassment of Tenants
- i. Tyler asked if tenants have the right to get legal fees reimbursed if their suit is won. Not currently but there is an effort to add.
 - ii. If a new development is built and asks for a rent increase, it has to be approved by the city.

- iii. Stacy raised the anti-harassment policy (council file # 14-068) and efforts to require a fine for landlords for not following the policy.
- iv. Ashley asked if we can push the council offices to advocate for this. Mike Bonin and Paul Koretz's offices

6. New Business

- a. 6.1 Discussion concerning SB 330 renter protections
 - i. At the previous board meeting, the MVCC Board passed a motion in favor of SB 330 renter protections.
 - ii. In spite of this law passing, LA City Council passed a motion on September 30th recognizing that HCID and Dept of City Planning were not enforcing SB330 protections and asking the LA City Attorney's office to write an ordinance that will be used to hold these departments accountable to implementation of the required policies.
 - iii. The MVCC passed a motion in support of SB330 supports the following protections: for tenants to have a right to be notified of purchase and demotion, the right to remain in the building until 6 months before construction begins, the requirement of 1-1 replacement of RSO statements, and that tenants have first right of return, and that the tenant has the right to sue the City of LA if these rights are not protected.
- b. 6.2 Discussion concerning California Proposition 21
 - i. Amends state law to allow local governments to establish rent control on residential properties over 15 years old.
 - ii. Allows local limits on annual rent increases to differ from current statewide limit.
 - iii. Allows rent increases in rent-controlled properties of up to 15 percent over three years at start of new tenancy (above any increase allowed by local ordinance).
 - iv. Exempts individuals who own no more than two homes from new rent-control policies. -In accordance with California law, prohibits rent control from violating landlords' right to fair financial return
 - v. Stacy notes that in the absence of removing Costa-Hawkins, it is a good start at stabilizing rent
- c. 6.3 Discussion and possible action concerning a City of LA Vacancy Tax (CF 19-0623)
 - i. Tyler described that it is currently possible as a ballot measure for 2022, but could be brought earlier.
 - ii. Stacy noted that bringing it earlier would cost a lot to run a special election.

- iii. Tyler prepared a draft motion in support. The motion notes similar policies that have been passed.
 - 1. Ashley expressed support
 - 2. Tyler says that an economist, this is a nearly perfect tax.
 - 3. Stacy noted that Mike Bonin has proposed a similar policy already.
 - 4. Kalani also supports the motion because of concerns about vacant buildings. She stated that homeless people have tried to break into a vacant building near her and is worried about safety hazards due to homeless people starting fires.
 - 5. Kalani suggested that public safety is also an issue with vacant buildings (both the structure and to neighbors)
 - 6. Stacy noted that residential home should eventually be included for individuals who own homes as investments. Tyler drafted language in the motion and Annie suggested it be more general since vacant properties can produce safety issues regardless of whether anyone is temporarily in the building.
 - 7. Stacy suggests that we pass the motion and can pass a second community impact statement with more specific policy suggestions.
 - 8. Ashley moved to approve, Stacy seconded. No opponents. Motion approved 5-0-0.
- iv. 6.4 Discussion and possible action concerning marketing and outreach for the December 5th, 2020 meeting (rescheduled from the usual date) to share information, resources and protections related to evictions
 - 1. Stacy suggested we use the meeting to assess services and needs of the renter community.
 - 2. Annie noted that we could use the Nov or Dec meeting to update on general resources available because if people are struggling to pay rent, they are likely to be in need of other supports.
 - 3. Tyler shared a flyer for the December meeting. Stacy suggested sharing a QR code. Tyler wanted to get door hangers but since the Outreach meeting was cancelled recently, he was unsure of the status.
 - 4. Annie moved to make a motion to approve materials. Ashley seconded. Motion passed 5-0-0.

5. Tyler will bring a funding motion to PLUM and potentially Outreach to fund printing/marketing costs

7. Meeting adjourned at 3:41pm