

**Minutes of Meeting
Code Enforcement Advisory Committee
City Hall Annex, 520 Main Street
Thursday, November 16, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER

Demetrius Ramirez called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

ATTENDANCE

Committee: Councilmember Rob Powell, Dennis Hull, Dawn Thomas, Wanda Thompson, Rosemary Howard, Keith Richardson

Absent: Kerry White, Steve Hackett, Robert Miller

Staff: Demetrius Ramirez, Chief Building Official; Tyler Farrow, Neighborhood Improvement Officer and Carol Lee, Neighborhood Improvement Secretary

REVIEW OF September 21, 2023, MEETING MINUTES

No Comments

DISCUSSION ITEMS

An inoperable vehicle is defined as *a vehicle which cannot be driven upon the public streets for reason including, but not limited to being unlicensed, wrecked, abandoned, in a state of disrepair, or incapable of being moved under its own power.* More specifically, a vehicle is deemed to be inoperable per Sec. 1-5 of the Unified Development Code, if it meets one or more of the criteria that was included in the memo attached to the agenda packet.

There was a discussion on the enforcement process for inoperable vehicles, particularly regarding missing or expired tags. Staff stated that they use door hangers to notify residents of expired tags when the tags are at least 60 days past due. If the expired tags are not updated after 1 week, a violation notice is sent and starts the standard violation timeline. Dennis Hull stated that he had received a complaint from a resident who received a violation for having Kansas tags. Staff stated that if there is no front tag, it is in violation because the State of Missouri requires a front and rear tag. Residents need to contact the officer who issued them the violation notice or the door hanger if they have questions. Councilmember Powell asked who takes care of out-of-state vehicles parked in driveways. Staff responded that the Police Department takes care of those situations. Partially or wholly dismantled vehicles are treated the same as missing or expired tags. Any violation notices go to both the tenant and property owner and/or manager if it is a rental property.

Eviction process and household items left in the front yard

Evicted households have 48 hours to collect their household items that are left on the exterior of the residence. After 48 hours, the items are subject to the code enforcement process.

Wanda Thompson discussed a recent situation where junk/trash/debris was left outside for 3 weeks, which attracted additional illegal dumping, homeless persons, and animals. There were concerns that

this was reported and staff did not move quickly enough to address this issue before it escalated to the point of the police being called to stop additional illegal dumping.

Wanda Thompson recommended making landlords aware of the 48-hour requirement and better notifying them of the eviction process as part of the Rental Registration and Inspection Program. Staff stated that the eviction process is through the Court system, but can still let landlords know that after an eviction, any junk/trash/debris left outside after 48 hours is subject to the violation and abatement process. Property owners are responsible for removing any junk/trash/debris on their property, even if they didn't put it there or it was dumped illegally.

Appeals process for Code Enforcement violations

The appeal process for nuisance code violation is provided in Sec. 14-6 of the Code of Ordinances. Specifically 14-6(d), which allows a person served with a violation notice to request an appeal to the Building Official within seven (7) days of receiving a violation. The appeal process does not stop the abatement process, but if the property is abated, the fees associated with the abatement may be challenged. A citizen may appeal the Building Official's decision to the City Council. This appeal process only applies to nuisance violations. It does not apply to any violations with the Unified Development Code (UDC) - zoning code. Any appeal of the UDC must be appealed to the Board of Zoning Adjustment.

The Committee asked staff what happens if a resident or owner appeals their notice to the Building Official. Staff stated that they would momentarily stop the abatement process to review the violation in further detail before making a determination. It is a judgement call.

OTHER DISCUSSIONS

Other items that were brought forward by the Committee for discussion, including:

- A resident recently went to Court for having a piece of plywood on a pallet left outside. Wanda Thompson asked if there could be any leeway for these types of situations.
- The Committee inquired about residents ignoring Building Codes when building a garage or shed and not obtaining permits. Staff stated that they are currently working on additional communications regarding permits for accessory structures. These are Unified Development Code (UDC)/zoning code requirements, which have a separate, more difficult appeal process and are less likely to be appealed than a nuisance violation.
- The Committee received an update on the Rental Registration and Inspection Program, which will start in July 2024. Staff is currently reviewing all properties in the city to locate unlicensed rental units. Staff is trying to send out notifications at the beginning of 2024.

NEXT MEETING DATE: To Be Determined

ADJOURNMENT

Demetrius Ramirez adjourned the meeting at 7:13 P.M.