

PROPERTY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 24, 2016

Present: Chair Bill Schmidt; Members: Bill Burger, Sandy Gresik; *Village Board liaison*: Chester Pojack; *Staff liaison*: Steve Kalish; *Staff members*: Tom Bialas, Jennifer Hopwood.

Not Present: Eric McFadden, Ann Weinsheim, Jim Hilborn

Chairman Bill Schmidt called the meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

Minutes

February 24th, 2016 minutes were approved.

Topic of Discussion – Window Egress

1. Inspector Kalish started the Window Egress discussion by stating that the Inspectors and Department Managers have regular discussion regarding this topic so that all members of Code Enforcement and Community Development are on the same page and as with many code regulations, different restrictions change periodically as State and Federal Code changes. The window egress started with rooms in the basements and then into all bedrooms in the house. The Village and Rental Program are doing well with this. It can be painful for some of the landlords and homeowners, but after all is said and done, they understand the benefits and safety=aspects that Village tries to maintain for the residents.
2. Assistant to the Director Bialas explained that some requirements are based on state requirements not just Village. He explained the different rules for Rental Vs Real Estate Transfers:
 - a. Rental – if there are bedroom windows that are non-compliant, the landlord has a year to bring one-bedroom window in each bedroom into compliance.
 - b. Rental – If the basement is deemed a habitable space and is “finished” in any way there has to be an Emergency Egress Window in place. If there is a bedroom in the basement, the bedroom must have an egress window.
 - c. Real Estate Transfer – if the home is up for sale and during the inspection the bedroom windows are found to be non-compliant, but are either original to the home or were replaced PRIOR to July 14, 2015, the buyer of the home must sign an Acknowledgement of Non-Compliance notifying them that the windows are non-compliant and when they go to replace them, they must be brought up to code at the time of replacement. The same goes for basement windows, provided the space is not deemed “habitable”.
 - d. Real Estate Transfer – if the home is up for sale and during the inspection the bedroom windows are found to be non-compliant and were replaced July 15, 2015 to present day, this means they were installed without a permit and the owner is notified they must apply a permit and install windows that are compliant with code in order to pass the final inspection for the permit. If the basement is finished and is habitable, there must be egress windows, same as with the rental program. If the basement was finished without permits, the owner has to either apply for all remodeling permits necessary or deconstruct the basement and return it to an uninhabitable living space.

3. Assistant to the Director Bialas also explained how the new windows have larger frames due to insulation and manufacturing so replacing a window like for like will not produce the same size opening so a window that perhaps was originally to code may not be one replaced with a newer model.
4. The Village does not try to make a hardship for any of the homeowners and does not require the homeowner to make the window openings larger (cutting into the side of the home) in the bedrooms, they just have to make reasonable effort to make the opening of the window as large as possible which usually entails replacing the existing window with a different style window. For example, they may need to replace a double hung with an encasement, or replace an oriole window with a 50/50 and so forth. This is not the case with basement windows. If there is a habitable living space, the owner/landlord must provide a means of emergency egress and this may require cutting into the foundation of the structure and in some cases excavation.
5. Trustee Pojack asked what if it is an unfinished basement, but there is a pool table down there for the kids? Assistant to the Director Bialas stated that if the area is finished and people can spend time down in the basement, it is considered habitable and therefore needs the emergency egress. It was mentioned "what if the kids are down there and playing pool, and a fire breaks out in the home to where the stairs up to the home are now engulfed. There is no other way for the kids to escape the basement. This is obviously a very bad situation where there could be loss of life. This is a serious issue to do with life safety. There have been many compliments from individuals moving into the Village due to our stance on the window egress regulations. This not only helps with safety and habitable spaces, but helps with the property value and is a huge selling point for the homes that have been upgraded. It is a tough topic, but one that in the end is appreciated by all parties despite the initial difficulties this situation presents.
6. Permit requirements are not just something in Glendale Heights. Members of the public often comment that DuPage County does not require as many permits as our Village. It is a misnomer that DuPage County does not require permits. They do.
7. Trustee Pojack mentioned the landlord that had 6 units in the Dillon Townhome area. Inspector Kalish replied that yes, that was a difficult case, but the Village stayed on top of the situation and issued citations and compliance notices, and to date, all properties have passed recent inspection and all fines have been paid. The Village is slowly getting to inspections of many homes with help from both the Rental and Real Estate Programs. Code Enforcement staff is working to improve documentation done to assist all inspectors to be on the same page to bring properties into compliance.
8. Bill Burger "Back to habitable space", what is the difference between playing pool in the basement versus having a washer and dryer down in the basement. If the washer and dryer are down in the basement do you need a window or is that non-compliant? Inspector Kalish responded "no, but good question. Going down to do laundry does not generally mean that the resident is spending time down there, they are not down there for a prolonged period where they are making a habitable space. Once the space starts to be finished, ceiling a drop ceiling is installed there is drywall put up, electric outlets go in for more lighting and TV, gaming systems, etc. then the space is becoming "finished" or "habitable".

Topic of Discussion – Spring Cleaning

1. With help from the Police Department Community Service Officers, Community Development has been able to stay on top of some property maintenance issues.
2. Trustee Pojack stated that the Village really needs to address fences. There are some with portions down. Some that have trash in them. Inspector Kalish replied that the winds lately have not helped both in regards to the fence and trash being blown around. Code Enforcement will be out looking at property maintenance and there should be improvement in the general landscape of the Village in the coming weeks.
3. Assistant to the Director Bialas added “right now the inspectors are all completely booked with inspections and are frequently able to observe while enrooted to their inspections and are reacting to Service Requests that residents call in.
4. Inspector Kalish “Yes once we get a call we enter it in the system and issue notices. They have 3 days to clear the issue and then violations are issued.
5. Assistant to the Director Bialas “we do try to keep a day every few weeks clear for all inspectors to be available to go out, but due to the volume of the inspection requests at this time, even those free days get booked.

Topic of Discussion – Miscellaneous Discussion

1. 21 ?? Wyatt – Per Trustee Pojack, the property failed their final window inspection but has yet to come into compliance or have the permit closed.
2. Multi-family buildings 778 and 776 Marilyn – need to be issued property maintenance violations. There is trash in all the bushes, garbage cans on the patios, rather than taking to trash corrals, the front door locks do not work and you cannot use your key, hallway windows are left open and are leaking, the hedge when pulling out by the sidewalk is too high and you cannot see if people are walking or traffic and the hallways are still cluttered with bikes and kid’s toys causing a fire hazard. Per Sandy Gresik. Additionally, there is a mold issue in Sandy’s brother’s unit specifically due to a water leak that has not been corrected.
3. 2170 Payson – the garbage was out day of Property Enhancement Meeting (Wednesday). There were pictures shown to Inspector Kalish and Assistant to the Director Bialas. Possible overcrowding (end house by the creek). Per Trustee Pojack.
4. 173 Lake Ridge – not listed as a rental property Sandy Gresik reported that the property has different people rotating in and out all the time, possibly one family but a lot and all different.
5. Bill Berger started with Thanking Code Enforcement for their efforts addressing garbage being out to early and placement of cans on the 4-5 streets around Dickens.
6. There is still an issue with the house at 656 Dickens that is feeding the wild animals. Bill Berger.
7. Bill Berger inquired about the Shell station that is be up at Army Trail and Bloomingdale Road. Inspector Kalish responded that there are code enforcement violations issued and the Village is working with the owners.

Next Meeting: May 25th, 2016 at 6:30 PM.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM