





Memorandum

TO: Kevin J. Jackson, Village Manager 

FROM: Tammie Grossman, Director, Development Customer Services 

FOR: Village President and Board of Trustees

DATE: April 26, 2022

SUBJECT: Crime Free Housing Ordinance

On July 18, 2016, the Village Board adopted a Crime Free Housing Ordinance which is codified as Section 12-2-12 of the Village Code. The Ordinance was adopted after a series of criminal activities occurred in rental properties in the Village. Most significantly, there was a heroin overdose of a young girl in the property located at 855 Lake Street. Additionally, there were smaller apartment buildings managed by absentee landlords where tenants were engaging in criminal activity that was directly impacting their neighbors. As a result, the Village adopted the Crime Free Housing Ordinance. The Ordinance requires owners to attend a crime free housing seminar that the Village incorporates into its Annual Management Seminar. Additionally, the Ordinance provides that all leases shall contain a Crime-Free Housing Lease Addendum substantially in the form provided in the Ordinance.

Since the Village enacted the Ordinance, we have held meetings with two landlords and the Chief of Police. One incident involved the same property located at 855 Lake Street, which at the time was owned by an absentee landlord, involving an armed robbery which resulted in a police chase at Scoville Park. The other incident involved a property located on Taylor Avenue owned by a local landlord and involved drug related activity. In both situations, after meeting with Chief Tanksley, the owners relied on the Crime Free Housing lease addendum to begin eviction proceedings against the tenants. The owner of 855 Lake Street subsequently sold the property and it is in the process of being rehabbed. We have not had any additional issues with the other property on Taylor Avenue.

On April 20, 2022, the Village received a letter from the NAACP and the NYU School of Law stating that the Ordinance is vague and overbroad, especially the provisions of the Crime Free Lease Addendum. Village staff, including Village Attorney Stephanides and Interim Police Chief Shatonya Johnson, reviewed the letter and the history of the Ordinance. At this time, it is our opinion that the Village should repeal the provisions of the Crime Free Housing Ordinance that were raised in the letter. The Village is still able to confer with owners to

discuss criminal activity at rental properties and possible abatement per Section 16-3-1 of the Village Code.

Village staff will begin to prepare the necessary ordinance amendment for review and possible adoption at a future Village Board meeting. We have notified the authors of the letter of our intent to repeal the provisions of the Ordinance raised in said letter.

If you have any questions, please contact Tammie Grossman, Director of Development Customer Services at 708.358.5422.

CC: Lisa Shelley, Deputy Village Manager
Ahmad Zayyad, Deputy Village Manager
Paul Stephanides, Village Attorney
Shatonya Johnson, Interim Chief Police Department
Cameron Davis, Assistant Director, Development Customer Services
Christina M. Waters, Village Clerk
Department Directors