

Robicheau, Vanessa

Cc: McHattie, Brian
Subject: RE: letter to Planning Committee re Rental Housing

From: Marilyn Gear Pilling
Sent: September-15-13 3:08 PM
To: Robicheau, Vanessa
Cc: McHattie, Brian; Carolyn Kinsley
Subject: letter to Planning Committee re Rental Housing

To the Hamilton City Planning Committee ~

We would like to express strong support for the Rental housing licensing . We live at the intersectio of Cline Avenue North and Paisley Avenue North, two blocks west of Westdale village and a ten minute walk from McMaster University. This is not the area with the most severe rental housing problems, yet the problems are noticeable enough even here, and when one walks in the other areas of Westdale, problems are even more evident.

Garbage is routinely strewn in the gutters and on front and side lawns. Grass is allowed to become long and weedy. Gardens become overgrown and filled with weeds. Sidewalks are left icy and unshovelled in winter. The longer the houses are rented, the more dilapidated the outward appearance becomes. Many of the houses are firetraps, as evinced by several serious fires in past years. Mice, rats and bedbugs are problems.

In the Westdale and West Hamilton areas, it is easy to spot immediately which houses are rental and which are inhabited by owners.

Not every single owner is guilty of allowing his or her rental house to run down, inside and out, but having lived in our house for thirty-eight years and three months, we have seen a regrettable deterioration of the neighbourhoods, in all the areas I have outlined above. I can state categorically that most owners of these rental houses **do neglect** both the inside and outside of their homes, do not pick up the garbage or enforce basic hygiene, do not look after the lawns and gardens, or clear the snow and salt the ice.

The licensing of rental housing is badly needed so that property owners can be held responsible and the deterioration of what were once beautiful neighbourhoods can be stopped.

To city councillors we say: Please do not allow the lobbying by owners of rental housing to influence your vote. As you will know, the landlords are clearly not disinterested observers of the issue. They represent their own interests, not the welfare of the community as a whole, and their interests are to make as much of a profit as they can from these houses which, sadly, in most cases, means neglecting the aspects of home ownership that I have mentioned.

We are very hopeful that as elected representatives you will consider the public good rather than special interests, and will pass laws that will ensure that neighbourhoods can be lived in, and enjoyed, by all of us.

Yours truly,
Marilyn and Dan Pilling