

Council Agenda Report

Date: November 13, 2018

Prepared by Oden C. Wheeler Jr., Director DPW

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SUBJECT: Bradford House

Recommendation: That Council review and accept Code Enforcement report for informational purposes.

Discussion:

Over the past few months Commissioner Foster has presented to Council that she has received numerous complaints from residents at the Bradford House; i.e. frequent elevator malfunctions, bed bugs, lack of maintenance, failure of management to make repairs, etc. On or about September 19th, a community meeting was held with the residents of the Bradford House to listen to their concerns, and/or complaints, with Comm. Foster, Patrick Comiskey City Manager, Oden Wheeler Dir. DPW, Susan Webb Division Manager Building Services, Derick Johnson DHCD, and Bradford House Management were in attendance. Following this effort Susan Webb and Todd Parks Code Enforcement Officer have conducted numerous inspections, with follow up briefings with DHCD, HUD, and Comm. Foster. Please find attached a detailed report of their efforts, and accomplishments. Our efforts in improving the living conditions for the residents of the Bradford House are long from being concluded. HUD, and DHCD who provide funding assistance to many residents, have been and will continue to be a major partner in this effort. Rescue Fire Company have been a valuable partner in our efforts in addressing the elevator and fire code violations within the facility. HUD has presented they will begin to hold funding if owners and/or management don't mitigate the violations to City standards and within our allotted time lines.

Fiscal Impact:

Staff time, and as of this date one \$1,000 fine has been issued.

Approved By: Patrick Comiskey, City Manager 

Bradford House Timeline

9/7/2018 - Received a complaint regarding maggots - Code Enforcement responded and observed maggots in the hallway. Management was powerwashing the maggots back into the compactor room. They were informed that this issue had to be fixed right away.

9/10/2018 - Code Enforcement revisited to see if the maggot issue was cleaned up. A few maggots were observed in the hallway along with a dead mouse. That day contact was made with Derick Johnson of DHCD to determine where to go from here.

9/19/2018 - Meeting was held at the Bradford House w/Officials. In attendance were: City Council Commissioner Foster, Patrick Comisky (City Manager), Odie Wheeler (Director DPW), Susan Webb (Division Manager) & Derick Johnson (DHCD Quality Control Supervisor) Issues were discussed and a list of unit complaints were taken and compiled. (Please see attached list)

9/28/2018 - Code Enforcement Staff returned to reinspect the unit complaints received at the above meeting. No corrections were made. Inspections were scheduled for October 2, 2018 to check again for progress.

10/2/2018 - No corrections were again made. Corrective actions letters were written for the violations observed. (Please see attached City of Cambridge Notice of Violation).

During this visit room # 225 (Ms. Waller) was found to have a hoarding situation and to be severely unsanitary. Code Enforcement worked directly with the residents family and Adult Protective Services (APS). * See all updates for this case marked (HOARDING)

10/5/2018 - (HOARDING) Code enforcement staff met with Ms. Waller and her daughter in law. We discussed her unit needing to be cleaned out by the following week 10/12/2018. Ms. Waller was argumentative, but the daughter in law stated that she will do her best to clean the unit out.

10/12/2018 - Susan Webb was contacted by Tanya Winters regarding the conditions at the Bradford House. She is the Senior Account Executive, Asset Management Division for HUD. She said the Bradford House could be in danger of losing funding if things did not change. She stated that when speaking to the management company, that she was reassured that the current violations were new and the building has been maintained very well until now.

I was also contacted by Michele Folino, she is the Regional Vice President for the management company. She just wanted to let us know that she will be coming to do site visits during the week of October 15, 2018.

10/12/2018 - (HOARDING) When code enforcement staff returned with APS, nothing had been cleaned out of the unit. Ms. Waller was not cooperative with her family. She said she would only work with APS to clean her unit out.

10/15/2018 - (HOARDING) Code enforcement and APS returned to Ms. Waller's unit. She stated that she needed a first floor handicapped unit and had been on a waiting list. We spoke with management and made the agreement to have her moved downstairs within a week, with the understanding that she could only bring a minimal amount of personal belongings due to infestation and the hoarding issue and as long as her family would agree to clean out her second floor unit within 30 days.

10/21/2018 - Susan Webb is tentantly scheduled for a conference call with Tanya Winters and Michele Folino, to get a status report on the repairs. Waiting for a time.

10/22/2018 - Conference call between Tanya Winters (HUD), Michele Folino (Management) & Susan Webb; Updates given are below:

The previous exterminator was terminated and new one was hired

Currently making extensive repairs (out of the owners pocket, does not have HUD funding for this

10 yr lithium battery smoke detectors were installed in all units

Cannot find a problem with the elevator; I informed Michelle that possibly she should consult with another contractor and if another 911 call is made after the compliance date of 11/5/2018, fines will be issued. I said I would share the number of calls for service with both Tanya and Michele.

Two (2) complaints came into HUD over the weekend: (1) was regarding the heat not being turned on yet. Michele stated that the heat would be turned on today. (2) Was an email from Fred Dayton, questioning how the Events Coordinator position was funded, through HUD or privately through management. Michele stated through a grant.

10/23/2018 - Code enforcement inspected the structure the smoke detectors - all in compliance.

10/25/2018 - (HOARDING) Ms. Waller was successfully moved into her new unit on the first floor.

11/4/2018 - Fire department was dispatched to Bradford house for someone trapped in the elevator. Upon arrival of the fire department there was a person trapped in the elevator, that had to be extricated. Both elevators were out of service, however they were able to get the back elevator working. The front elevator was the one the person was trapped in, the fire department tried everything they could in resetting it, turning it on and off once they made forced entry into the mechanical room, all to no avail. So they had to manually lower the elevator to get the person out. The Fire Dept advised them to keep the front elevator out of service until a repair person had been on site. Approx. half hour after fire company cleared the Bradford House and being told to keep the elevator out of service, someone from the Bradford House called the Fire Chief and told them that they had turned it off and then back on and it was working and being used. Within less than an hour after being notified of the elevator begin put back in service, RFC was dispatched by the 911 center for a person stuck in the elevator at the Bradford House. Again fire department found a person trapped in the front elevator and again had to lower the elevator by hand to get them out. Having been notified by Adam Pritchett, Fire Chief of the recent incidents, Oden Wheeler, Director DPW advised Chief Pritchett he would be on location in approx. 15 to 20 minutes. Upon Mr. Wheeler's arrival he met with Chief Pritchett, and the Maintenance person. Mr. Wheeler asked the Maintenance person had he been advised by a fire chief that the elevator was not to be used until an elevator repair person had been there to inspect and make repairs if needed? The Maintenance person informed Mr. Wheeler that was correct however he has been told to turn it off and back on and if it works to allow individuals to use it. When questioned who had told him that, he said the repair company and management both. Mr. Wheeler asked if he understood correctly that the repair company and management told him to reset the unit by turning it off and on, if it works it was ok to use. The maintenance person changed that maybe the repair company did not, however local management had. Maintenance person was advised my Mr. Wheeler and RFC Chief Adam Pritchett that this elevator was not to be used until a repair person had been there, and authorized the elevator to be put back in service. Mr. Wheeler informed the maintenance person that a fine was going to be issued by Code enforcement on Monday due to their continued violations, and if the elevator was placed in service prior to the authorization from the repair person, each time the fire department was dispatched to their location for the elevator malfunction would be considered a separate offense and citations would be issued for each occurrence. Maintenance person stated they understood. A \$1,000 fine was written for this instance by code enforcement.

11/5/2018 - Code enforcement returned to reinspection all of the violations on the original notice of violation. All violations were corrected for the exception of infestation and the elevators. They have hired a new exterminator, at the cost of \$14,000. When we left the inspection, we found that one of the tires on the City inspection vehicle had been intentionally slashed. Cambridge Police Department was called to investigate.

11/5/2018 - (HOARDING) While visiting with Ms. Waller, we found that she has been bringing stuff from her unit back into her new unit, causing a reinfestation. She was given a first violation of housekeeping from management. I am afraid that management may use this to work towards evicting her in the future.