

Fair Rent Commission

January 15, 2009

***Present: B. Chianese, S. Mazzuco, K. Placella, P. Kallinkos, R. Jannelli,
M. Williams, A. Parisi, L. Yaglenski, J. Hazard***

Staff: S. Zaborowski

The meeting for the City of Danbury Fair Rent Commission was called to order at 7:15pm by Chairperson S. Mazzuco, 2nd floor conference room, City Hall, 155 Deer Hill Avenue, Danbury, Connecticut.

There is one hearing scheduled for this evening: case #493: Thomson vs. Crown Point at the Reserve. Chairperson Mazzuco requested introduction of all Commissioners. Commissioner Placella swore in all participants for this evening hearing. Chairperson Mazzuco read the Fair Rent Commission formal guidelines. Staff read both the Fair Rent Investigative report and the Danbury Health, Housing and Welfare report.

TENANT STATEMENT

Chairperson Mazzuco read the tenant's lease agreement and addendum for rental costs offered by Crown Point Reserve to all potential tenants. Certain concessions were given to each tenant, depending on each individual who approached management. Management indicated to the Commission that each case is unique and what is offered to one tenant will probably be different to another potential tenant. When lease renewals are provided, the terms of the original lease will be applied to the new lease agreement.

The tenant indicated to the Commission that she did not contest or considered the rental increase to be "harsh or unconscionable", but rather the lease agreements signed by tenants were not consistent or fair upon renewal. Ms. Thomson indicated that her original signed lease agreement was that she received 2 months free rent, as opposed to her next door neighbor who opted for a amortizing of the agreed upon rent over a 12 month period.

LANDLORD STATEMENT

Property management discussed the various agreements that could be offered to potential tenants, which are too varied to discuss, but would supply if the Commission deemed it necessary for tonight's hearing. The property manager states that Crown Point at the Reserve offers quality type housing, updated features both interior and parking/pet clauses. Each tenant can pick a variety of concessions for their rental unit, and upon

renewal of a new lease, could be offered the same plan or can add/delete proposals to their original lease(i.e. heated parking garage, pet allowances, etc.).

COMMISSION DECISION

The Commission requested information from both the tenant and the property manager. The Commission also reviewed both the Fair Rent Investigative report and the Danbury Health, Housing and Welfare report. After careful review, Commission Kallinkos made a motion that after careful deliberation and review of all materials and verbal testimony presented for this evenings hearing, the complaint presented by the tenant, Marianne Thomson, does not fall under the realms/jurisdiction of the Danbury Fair Rent Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Yaglenski. Discussion followed.

The Commission voted unanimously on the motion and advised the tenant to seek legal advice for further information. The tenant inquired if a copy of the tape for tonight's hearing will be available if her attorney makes a request. Staff indicated that the tenant may request a copy of the tape and would investigate this request further when approached by the Commission.

A motion to accept the minutes of December 11, 2008 was made by Commissioner Jannelli, seconded by Commissioner Placella, passed unanimously and placed on file.

Chairperson Mazzucco welcomed our new Fair Rent Commissioner Jean Hazard. Ms. Mazzucco stated that a donation was made in Peggy Koschel's memory by the Fair Rent Commission.

Staff provided a copy of the Fair Rent Commission 2009-2010 budget that was submitted to the Finance Department at the beginning of January. There are no changes to the budget as it has been presented for the past 4 budget periods.

The Fair Rent Commission by-laws still need to be posted in the Danbury paper, but is at a stop since the Mayor has frozen all department and commission budgets. A special request can be asked to the Common Council to release funds for special needs. A motion was made by Commissioner Jannelli to accept the Fair Rent Commission budget for fiscal year 2009-2010 as provided, seconded by Commissioner Mazzucco, and passed unanimously.

The next scheduled Fair Rent Commission meeting will be held on Thursday, February 19, 2009. Chairperson Mazzucco will review her request to the Tribunal to attend our next Commission meeting.

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Kallinkos, seconded by Commissioner Jannelli, passed unanimously.