

**MINUTES**  
**Public Hearing of the College Park City Council**  
**Tuesday, July 28, 2009**

**09-O-06**

**Ordinance Of The Mayor And Council Of The City Of College Park, Maryland,  
Amending City Code, Chapter 127 “Rent Stabilization”, §127-13 “Expiration Date”  
To Extend The Effective Date Of The Rent Stabilization Law Through September 1,  
2012.**

**7:00 P.M.**

**PRESENT:** Mayor Brayman; Councilmembers Wojahn, Catlin, Perry, Stullich,  
and Mark Cook.

**ABSENT:** Councilmembers Molinatto, Mary Cook and Hampton.

**ALSO PRESENT:** Joe Nagro, City Manager; Suellen Ferguson, City Attorney; Yvette  
Allen, Assistant City Clerk; Robert Ryan, Director of Public  
Services; Jonathan Sachs, Student Liaison.

Mayor Brayman opened the Public Hearing at 7:06 p.m. and invited Dr. Basu to give an overview of the Sage Policy Group August 2009 Report. Dr. Basu gave a summary of the Sage Policy Group August 2009 Report, “There Remains A Rational Basis for Rent Stabilization in College Park, Maryland”. Dr. Basu stated that the first report was conducted in April of 2005 which found reasons that there is a rational basis for Rent Stabilization. Dr. Basu stated that homeownership did not stop declining in College Park since the initial report, rents in College Park continue to rise, and code violations are higher among rental units than with owner occupied property. The August 2009 Sage report is attached.

**Robert Davis, 6905 Baltimore Avenue:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Feels that this Ordinance should apply to everyone equally, not only to the small businessman.

**Brian Mack, 21736 Noll Road, Mt. Airy, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Stated that this Ordinance discriminates against the students.

**Pat Hiban, No address given:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Stated that people choose where they want to live and will pay extra to live closer to the University of Maryland.

**Morgan Gale 1010 Wakeforest Drive College Park, MD:** Spoke in favor of extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance and stated that there should be an appeal board for landlords who can't meet their expenses due to this Ordinance.

**Paul Carlson, 203 Long Trail Lane, Rockville, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Feels that the intent of this Ordinance is to remove the students from College Park.

**Martin Brincefield, PO Box 23, College Park, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Stated that he is having a hard time figuring out the City's intent of this Ordinance. Also mentioned the high cost to rent an apartment in College Park

**Ken Blumenstock, 4400 West Virginia Avenue, Bethesda, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Stated that the rental market has changed drastically and he is having a difficult time finding tenants.

Councilmember Mary Cook asked Mr. Blumenstock why he thought he was having so much trouble finding tenants. Mr. Blumenstock stated that demand is low due to more people commuting, additional housing (apartments) being built in the City, and apartments offering good deals.

**John Hawvermale, 1342 Excalibur Lane, Sandy Spring, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Page 7 of the Sage report shows that rent is rising across the board. However, there was no mention that renting a room in a house is less than renting an apartment and wonders if the City is not regulating the wrong sector of the housing market.

Councilmember Perry asked Mr. Hawvermale if all of his houses were under the grandfather clause. Mr. Hawvermale stated he has concerns of what year, but that they do fall under the grandfather.

**Steve Glickman, President of the Student Body Government, 8319 Rhode Island Avenue, College Park, MD:** Mr. Glickman spoke in favor of extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Would like to see that this Ordinance apply to all rental properties such as apartments.

**William Chicca, 13713 Stoner Drive, Silver Spring, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. City has not proven that there is a basis for rent control. This Ordinance should apply to all rental properties in College Park and should not single out single-family residences.

**Adele Ellis, 4608 Beechwood Drive, College Park, MD:** Spoke in favor of the Rent Stabilization Ordinance and would like to see it extended.

**Daniel Hawvermale, 4619 Norwich Road, College Park, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. He moved out of the dorms in order to have more space. If property owners stop renting, there would be no other affordable places for renters. Feels that all rentals should be included in this Ordinance.

**Jake Fedcchko, 4619 Norwich Road, College Park, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Stated that he moved out of the dorms due to overcrowding and he gets better accommodations and service from a landlord. Further stated that the City should not be able to tell people what they can do with their personal property nor should they discriminate against a single-family residence.

Student Liaison Sachs asked Mr. Fedcchko if he has heard of high rent prices among his friends who live off campus. Mr. Fedcchko stated that his friends have spoken of high rent prices in the Knox Box area only.

**Mark Grisar, 4103 30<sup>th</sup> Street, Mt. Rainier, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Stated that the main reason for the establishment of rent control was to remove the students from the Old Town area. If this Ordinance were not to remove the students from Old Town, then apartments would have been included. The city should work with landlords instead of against them.

**Thibeaux Lincecum, 9605 51<sup>st</sup> Avenue, College Park, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

**Alan Tyler, 7204 Bowdoin Avenue, College Park, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Stated that the City should stop wasting money and spend it on selling College Park.

**David Dorsch, 4607 Calvert Road, College Park, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Rent control was added so that rents will not skyrocket. This law only applies to a small percentage of rental properties and if it was supposed to protect all, then all rentals should have to abide by the rent stabilization Ordinance.

Councilmember Catlin asked Mr. Dorsch if the Landlord Committee was going to present a study that would counter the Sage report. Mr. Dorsch stated that there is Dr. Fuller's report.

Councilmember Wojahn stated that several of the landlords that spoke tonight stated that they have an interest in working with the City on ways to improve properties. He asked Mr. Dorsch, as part of the Landlord Commission, what steps is he willing to take even if the extension of the Ordinance is or is not approved. Mr. Dorsch stated he or the Landlord Committee will sit down with Council to discuss the issues. When there is a problem, Council passes a new Ordinance which does not solve the problems/violations. Mr. Dorsch further stated that if there is a problem with a landlord, the Landlord Committee is more than willing to discuss the issues with the landlord in violation and assist in bringing him or her to compliance.

**Bob Hayes, 4902 Cherokee Street, College Park, MD:** Spoke in favor of extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Stated that the Rent Stabilization Ordinance is a great way to provide quality affordable housing.

**Mitch Miller, 14515 MacClintock Court, Glenwood, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Stated that the landlords keep their property in better condition than most of the homeowners and all of the foreclosed properties.

**Jack Robson, 4710 Harvard Road, College Park, MD:** Requested that council does not vote on extending the Ordinance until the court case. Once the case is resolved, then have a new accurate report done prior to approving any Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

**Andrew Fellows, 5807 Bryn Mawr Road, College Park, MD:** Stated that he was on Council in 2005 when the original Ordinance was approved and that it was a strong desire of the students to have affordable housing. Urges Council to extend the Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

Councilmember Mary Cook asked Mr. Fellows if he felt that Rent Stabilization discriminates against the small businessman since the Ordinance does not include apartments. Mr. Fellows feels that this Ordinance is not discriminatory and that it is the right of a Municipality to tailor an Ordinance to fit their jurisdiction. Apartments were not included in the Ordinance so as not to discourage additional student housing being built.

Councilmember Perry asked Mr. Fellows if he thought that it would create a panacea if the Rent Stabilization Ordinance was extended. Mr. Fellows said that Council did not feel it would be a cure, but it did play a role in stabilizing the exorbitant rent prices.

Mayor Brayman read an email into the record from Bob Baer who could not attend the hearing. Mr. Baer stated that he is against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance in any form.

**James Kane, 4206 Knox Road, College Park, MD:** Spoke against extending the Rent Stabilization Ordinance. Mr. Kane stated that if the City was looking out for the students, this Ordinance should apply to all rentals.

There being no further public comment, the Public Hearing was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

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Yvette T. Allen, Assistant City Clerk