



**NEW CASTLE COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES &  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE**

**HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

January 11, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.

**MINUTES**

- Call to Order  
Meeting called to order at 6:09 PM  
Members in attendance: *Christian Willauer (on-site), Bill McCool, Renee Spruiel and Rachel Stucker.*  
NCC Employees: *Joe Day, Laura Hay and Stephanie Rizzo.*
- Approval of Minutes
  - November 9, 2022
  - December 14, 2022
  - January 11, 2023*Minutes were not approved because there was not a quorum present.*
- Chairperson's Report  
*Christian advised that the County Executive is interviewing candidates for the three (3) vacant positions. Looking forward to some new members once confirmed by County Council.*
- HAB Business
  - Rental Code discussion with Housing Inspectors  
*Asked Joe Day, Land Use to discuss proposed changes to Rental Code Revisions (attached). Intent is to strengthen the Rental Code and improve rental housing stock quality. Opened floor to housing inspectors. Liabilities for home inspectors was brought up. Possibly already covered under current policy.*
    - *Kenny Rodriguez asked about safety checklist and liability.*
    - *John Kerrigan said County employee is indemnified and liability is issue. Suggests being 1099 employee protected under County indemnification. Joe Day clarifies that the home inspector would be contracted through owner, not New Castle County. New Castle County would provide home safety checklist.*
    - *Mark Desmond suggested NCC provide certification for home inspectors and fee rate. Joe Day stated NCC will not be setting fee rate; believes inspection would be 45-60 mins; could provide an orientation on expectations. Mark agreed inspectors would be interested in work. Price of inspection was landlords' main concern.*
    - *Rick Graff requested SOP from County to take to insurance company showing what inspection entails. Insurance company requires signed agreement prior to entering property.*

- *Kenardo Curry is a vendor for housing authorities – explained their process. Legislation is required and would be followed. Structure of inspection is similar to Section 8 annual inspections.*
- *Kenny Rodriguez reviewed current Rental Code and includes many systems like roofing, plumbing, etc. and believes would be a detailed inspection. Land Use would be creating a 1-page checklist. Rental Code is to be changed and will be going through process.*
- *Asked for inspector contact information to start dialogue on the inspection checklist*
- *Would home inspectors be able to handle the volume of 35,000 units per year? There are 30-40 home inspectors in Delaware. How long does it take to become a home inspector? NACHI requires 40-120 hours of instruction, examination, and 75 ride alongs. HQS 40 hour course with 2 hour test. Could be a job creation opportunity.*
- *Coordination of inspections with tenant does require additional logistics.*

➤ *Announcements*  
*None.*

➤ *Next Meeting*  
*February 8, 2023*

*Rachel motioned to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 7:05 PM*

# Rough Draft Proposed Rental Code Revisions

*October 6, 2022*

The following outline is a draft approach to an updated rental code concept that the Housing Advisory Board has discussed with the Departments of Land Use and Community Services. It is provided for comment only at this point. It borrows from Baltimore County, MD's approach. We look forward to discussing it at the next meeting, and after that considering a draft ordinance.

1. All rental units in New Castle County shall be inspected every two years
2. Inspections shall be completed by a licensed State of Delaware home inspector.
3. The inspection is a basic safety inspection not a building code inspection.
4. The home inspector shall utilize the rental inspection checklist developed by the DLU.
5. Property owners shall submit the passed inspection and the fee to the DLU.
6. The home inspector is required to report any unit that fails 2 inspections to the DLU.
7. The home inspector is required to report any structural or imminent life safety issues to DLU within 24 hours.
8. The inspection shall include inspecting all mechanical equipment that supports that rental unit and any common areas.
9. A new inspection is not required at the change of tenant.
10. A violation notice will be issued if rental unit is not registered or inspected.
11. An administrative hearing will be scheduled if it is not registered by the compliance date in the violation letter.
12. An owner-occupied dwelling renting a room to one tenant is exempt.
13. Owner-occupied renting to two or more tenants must be registered and inspected.
14. Section 8 units are exempt from the registration and inspection process
15. Tenants will not be evicted for noncompliance unless the unit is a life safety hazard.