



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

**HOUSING ADVISORY BOARD MEETING**

May 10, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.  
Administrative Conference Room  
77 Reads Way, New Castle, DE 19720  
**\*\*VIRTUAL ZOOM WEBINAR\*\***

**MINUTES**

- Call to Order  
*Meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM.  
Housing Advisory Board members gave an introduction.  
Members present: Christian Willauer (Chair), Darlene Sample (on-site), Tiffany Earle, Meghann Karasic, Bill McCool, Tyler Shade, and Renee Spruiel. Nick Beard (logged on later)  
County employees present: Joe Day, Laura Hay, and Stephanie Rizzo.*
- Approval of Minutes
  - April 12, 2023  
*Meghann motioned to approve the minutes. Darlene seconded the motion. Motion carried with Christian abstaining since she was absent.*
- Chairperson's Report  
*Nothing to report besides welcoming new members.*
- HAB Business
  - *County Executive initiative RE: debris and tree removal for seniors Discussed at last month's meeting. Information on the proposed grant for income eligible (80% AMI) senior homeowners. County Executive is allocating \$20,000 and was hoping the Board would approve matching those funds from Housing Trust Fund. County approved contractors would be used. Question about previous money allocated (150K towards homeownership repair) was awarded during the Affordable Housing Fund bid process – awarded to GoodNeighbors Home Repair. This funding would be handled by New Castle County. Meghann made the motion to approve using \$20K from Housing Trust fund to include adults with disabilities and allowing requests from the City of Wilmington, as long as they are less than 80% AMI. Motion was seconded by Darlene Sample. Motion carried unanimously.*
  - *Department of Land Use rental data Joe Day went over the rental data (attached). Commercial rental units are most likely mixed-use units on-top of commercial. Shows that most violations occur in owner-occupied properties compared to rentals. Could be owner-occupied properties have more concerned neighbors calling in complaints. Overall number of violations in rental units, broken down between apartment*

complexes (18.5%) and single family detached dwellings (78.9%) showing the larger problem is with rental SFD. Option to exempt large apartment complexes or handle with a different system. When department gets more than 10 complaints on an apartment complex, they visit with management. Original Rental Code stated 5% of rental inspections per year randomly – that was problematic because it wasted code officer's time since it was hard to enter units. Thought about phasing older apartment buildings into the process. Concern with outsourcing inspections to home inspectors. Department should think about building inspection fee into rental permit. An RFP would be needed to do so, would like to remain out of payment with inspector. Checklist would be provided and introductory training program, but would like to have home inspectors because of state licensing requirements. Reviewed draft checklist (attached). Suggested adding Lead paint and chipping/peeling paint. Other jurisdictions discussed how they addressed lead paint. Suggested also adding mold to the checklist. Another suggestion was plumbing – piping from old houses, not sure with testing water. Checklist should have Y/N. Would like to provide the home inspectors for input prior to finalization. Need to make it clear for health and safety of the unit instead of being broad. Longer the list, the more expensive – keep it simple and clear. Purpose of this is to set parameters, which would be needed to create legislation. Determining the who, what, when and where so legislation can be drafted. Rental inspections program would improve the housing stock by defining minimum standards. Checklist is critical – will further update based on Board's recommendations.

➤ Announcements

Would like to have an update on where New Castle County is based on the recommendations from the Board a year ago.

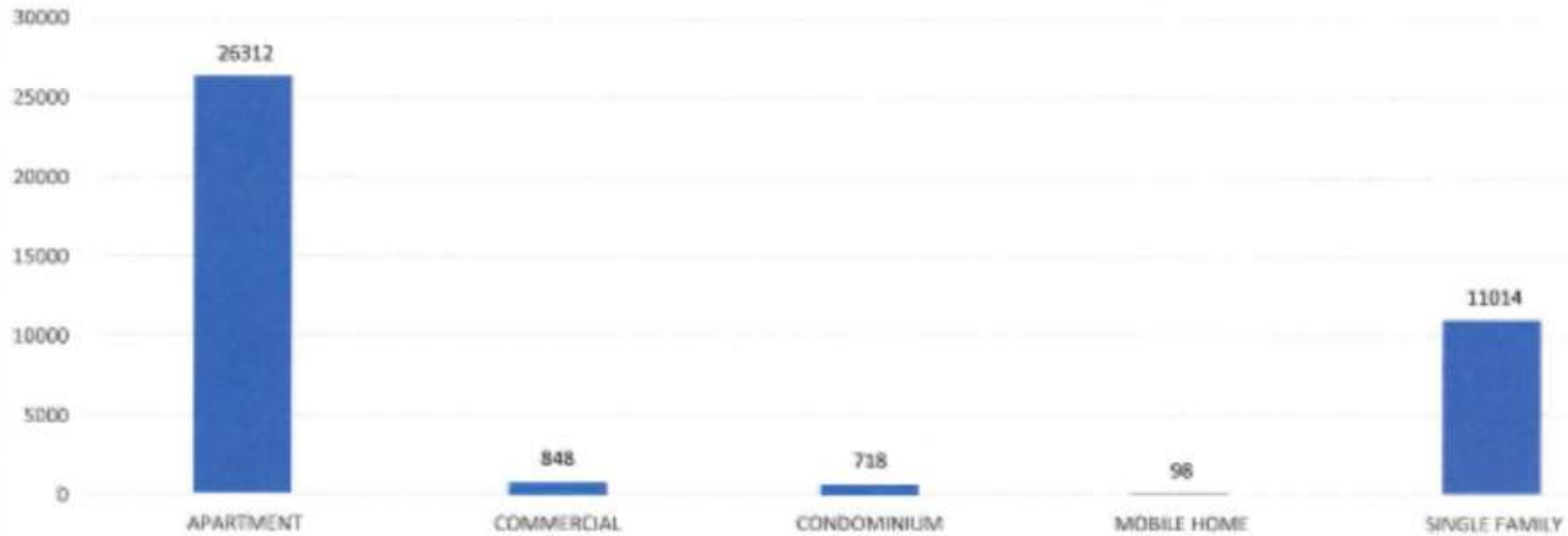
There was a housing meeting with the NCC 2050 Comp Plan. The location change hindered attendance as well as the stormy weather.

Day for Housing is 5/18/23 – please attend =)

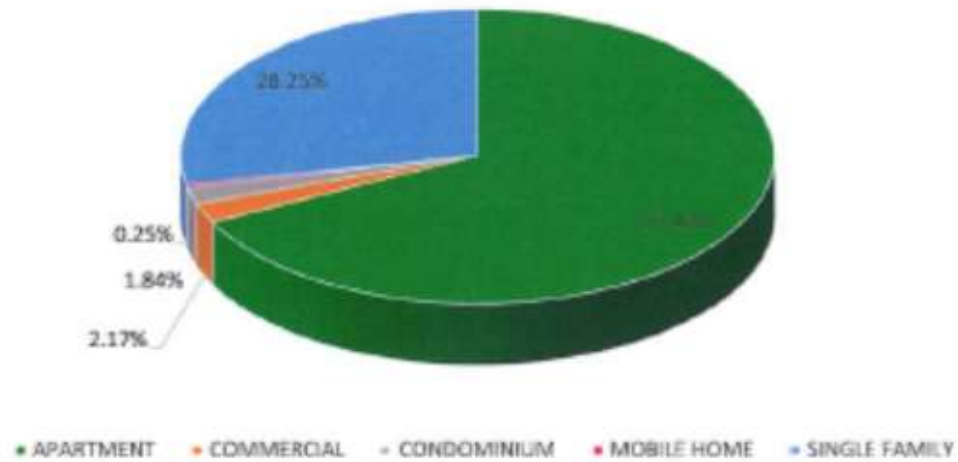
➤ Adjournment

Bill McCool made the motion to adjourn, Renee Spruiel seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM.

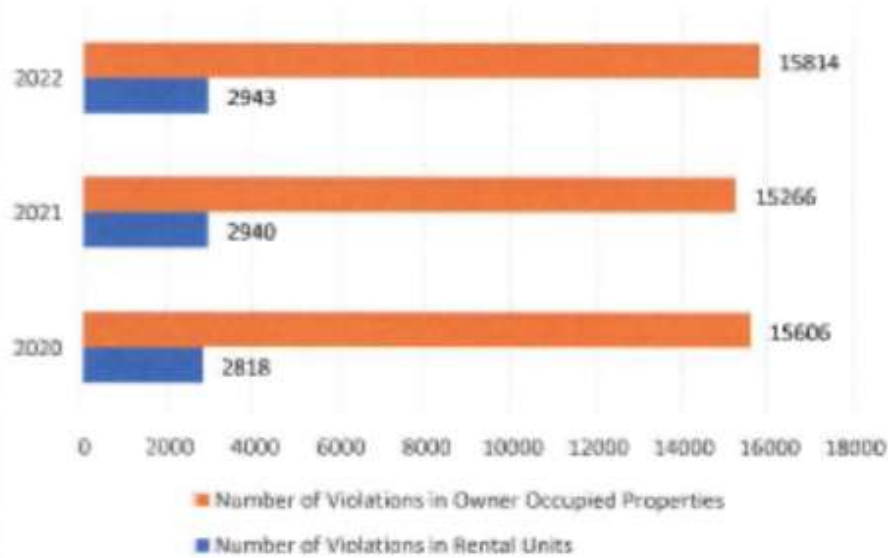
Number of New Castle County Rental Units by Type



Percentage of New Castle County Rental Units by Type



Number of Violations in Rental Units vs. Owner Occupied



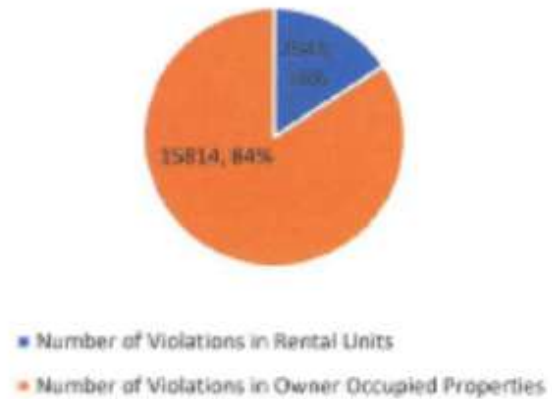
Percent of Violations in Rental Units vs. Owner Occupied 2020



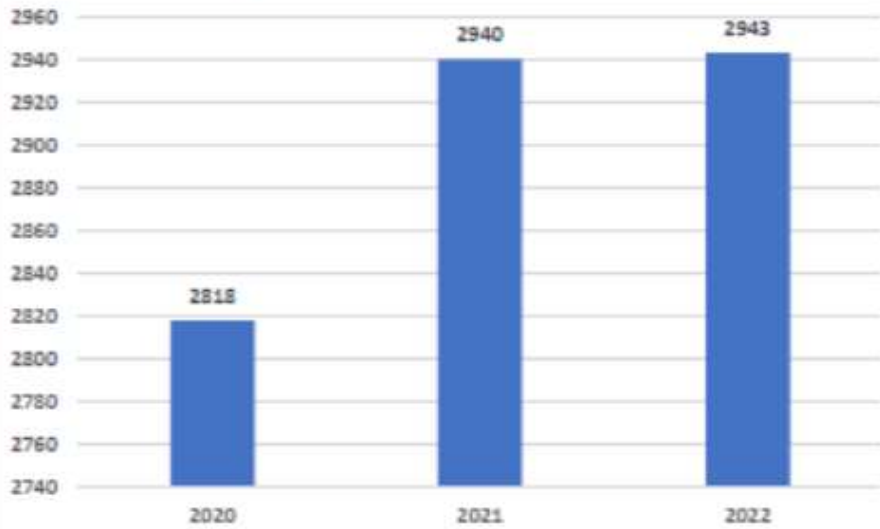
Percent of Violations in Rental Units vs. Owner Occupied 2021



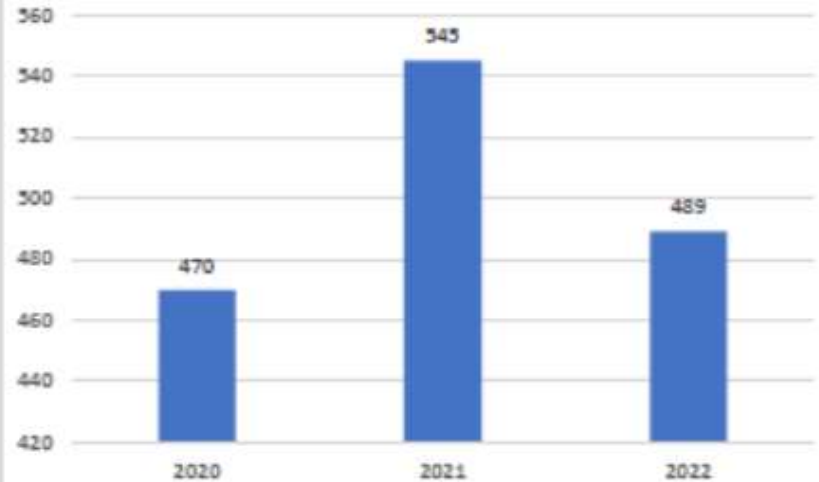
Percent of Violations in Rental Units vs. Owner Occupied 2022



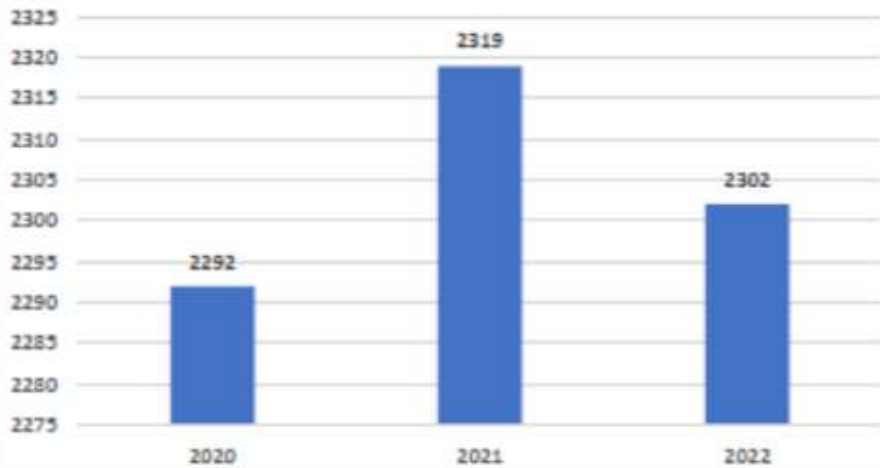
Number of Violations in Rental Units



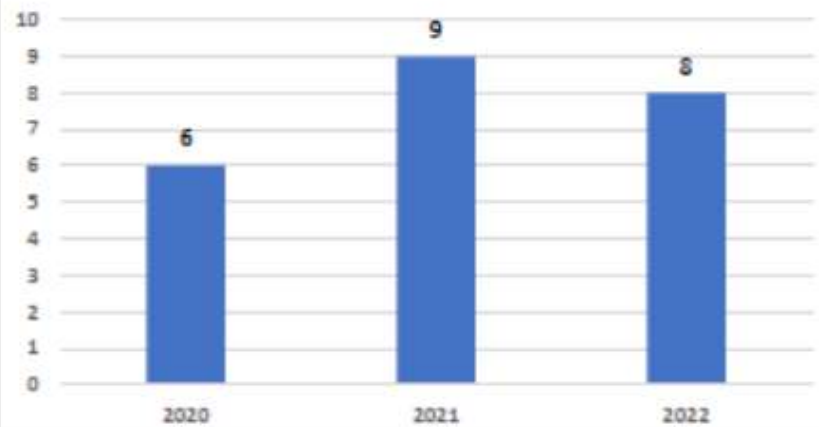
Number of Violations in Apartment Complexes



Number of Violations in Rented SFDs



Number of Apartment Complexes with More than 10 Violations



# **Draft - New Castle County Rental Code Inspection Checklist**

## **ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLIANCE**

- Property is registered with New Castle County.
- Ownership and contact information is clearly defined on the registration form.
- Registration fees paid.

## **EXTERIOR AREAS/STRUCTURE**

- Property has house numbers clearly visible from the street.
- The roof and walls are not deteriorated and do not have peeling paint or missing coverings.
- Eaves, soffits and gutters are operable and in good repair.
- Accessory buildings and fences in good repair.
- Doors are operable, able to be locked and in good repair.
- Windows and skylights are operable and in good repair.
- All windows are provided.
- Chimneys appear to be structurally safe and in good repair.
- Foundation appears to be adequate and in good repair.
- Property does not have broken, rotten, split, or buckled walls.
- Stairways, porches, decks, and balconies have flooring, supports, and handrails in good condition.
- Site appears to have adequate grading and drainage.
- Property does not have high weeds or grass.
- Property does not have an accumulation of garbage, junk, or debris.
- Property is not providing habitation for rodents, wild animals, or other vermin.
- Property does not have any illegal vehicles on site.
- Property does not have unsafe storage of combustible material.
- Property does not have any exterior hazards.

## **INTERIOR AREAS/STRUCTURE**

- Walls, ceilings, and floors structurally sound and in good repair.
- The building is maintained in a safe and sanitary condition.
- All stairs are in sound condition and good repair.
- Handrails firmly fastened and in good repair for all stairs.
- All habitable rooms are provided with adequate electrical service for proper illumination.
- The dwelling is free from bugs, insects and rodents.
- There is a working stove and oven.
- The walls of the shower stall are non-absorbent to a height of 48 inches.  The space between the wall tile and lip of the tub is caulked properly and water tight.
- The bathroom floor is non-absorbent.
- All interior doors are free of cracks and holes.
- All windows are weather-tight.
- All windows open and close without excessive force.
- All windows stay open on their own without support from other objects.

- All windows have working window locks.
- All windowpanes are in place and unbroken.

### **PLUMBING**

- Unit has an operable kitchen sink, toilet, and bathtub or shower.
- All applicable plumbing fixtures have hot and cold water and are connected to sanitary sewer system with proper clearance for usage and cleaning.
- Bathrooms provide adequate privacy and ventilation.

### **ELECTRICAL/MECHANICAL**

- Electrical service is properly maintained and is sufficient to support the electrical load.
- Adequate clearance for service is provided on the control side of all HVAC and utility appliances.
- Each unit has heating facilities capable of maintaining a room temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit in all habitable rooms and bathrooms. Cooking appliances and portable heating units shall not be used to provide heating to meet requirement.
- All electrical equipment, wiring, lighting, and appliances are properly installed and maintained in a safe and approved manner.
- Electrical panels are accessible, clearly marked, and circuits are properly labeled.
- Fuel fired equipment has appropriate and operable flues, venting and shutoff valves.
- Every habitable room and every bathroom contains at least one (1) properly installed electrical outlet.
- Every laundry room contains at least one (1) grounded-type receptacle or a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).
- Clothes dryer properly vented to the outside in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.
- There are cover plates on all outlets, switches, and junction boxes.
- GFCI outlets installed for all outlets within six (6) feet of a water source.
- Water heater has temperature and pressure relief valve piped not more than 6 inches above floor level or piped into sump pump pit or other approved termination.

### **FIRE SAFETY REQUIREMENTS**

- Each sleeping room, immediately outside of sleep areas, and each floor has an operable smoke alarm.
- All sleeping rooms have safe and appropriate access to an operable window for egress.
- Carbon monoxide detectors are installed immediately outside of sleeping rooms and on each level. (Only applies to properties with a potential carbon monoxide source.)
- Fire alarm and suppression systems properly installed and operational where required.
- All means of egress doors and windows are operable without need for keys, special knowledge or effort.
- All fire resistance ratings of walls, fire stops, shaft enclosures, floors and doors are properly maintained.

**Please note that this is not a complete list of items covered under a residential rental inspection but covers the more common violations.**