

Begin forwarded message:

From: oogs <oogs@burlingtontelecom.net>
Subject: Charter Change on Rental Agreements
Date: September 23, 2020 at 4:21:02 PM EDT
To: jshannon@burlingtonvt.gov

[WARNING]: External Message

Dear Ms. Shannon,

Last night I was informed that tonight there is a public meeting on a charter change that would affect all rental agreements in the city.

Firstly I am disappointed that we are offered such little forewarning of an important issue. As the city has the information on all of the registered rental properties, it is hard to understand why the email invitation to review and comment was not sent with enough time for review by all of those who may be affected.

I would like to enter my comments here in the record.

All landlords are not the same. Landlords that have an investment in multiple properties for profit, are a different grouping than home owners who rent part of the building to tenants. One rule will have difficulty in applying to all fairly.

If the problem that needs a solution is the unfair eviction of tenants, the solution should focus on that issue.

Making all rental agreements a lifetime contract unfairly binds the property owner to a contract they cannot get out of.

This will have a dramatic consequence on those home owner occupant landlords who live side by side with their "tenants". If the only way to end a lease is to require the expense of a long and costly legal dispute, the unintended consequence can be a strong disincentive to encourage the community based rental approach that has allowed Burlington to remain an affordable city. The most negatively impacted will be those owner occupied properties, where the objective is not profit but affordability to ease mortgage and tax pressures.

If it is not allowable to end a lease when the agreed contract ends, giving both sides the opportunity to renew or not renew, the result is a lifetime obligation. The city surely cannot intend to interfere in a mutually agreed contract by both signatories.

If the prospective tenant wants a lifelong lease, those situations should be discussed individually.

A better solution to the unfair eviction is to have available resolution resources where the tenant and the landlord can resolve their conflicts.

Making all landlords abide to lifelong contracts is to treat all owners of property as having ill intention or disrespect for tenants.

Cities that have tried to construct lifelong obligations and rent control have seen those properties suffer from poor maintenance and decreasing property value.

The possibility of change over at the end of each lease allows the owner the opportunity to repair and upgrade the property gradually, making for a better situation for subsequent renters. It is not possible to do this if the tenant is there for life.

The proposal may have good intentions of protecting the tenant, as they should be protected. I was a tenant all of my life until recently. I agree with strong controls to ensure that arbitrary evictions do not happen. The solution is a forum for quick and fair conflict resolution
Not lifelong leases.

Sincerely presented,
Hugo Martinez Cazon
83 Catherine Street
Burlington VT 05401

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