

## **GTF: Ordinance and Policy Sub-Task Force Meeting Minutes Thursday, February 16, 2023**

Attendees: John Scheflen, Kate Threefoot and Bev Clendening

Meeting was called to order at 7:35.

Minutes from the January meeting were approved.

### Ordinance 14

The recommendation for this ordinance is written as a revised ordinance; the second page is the old version of the ordinance. Kate can re-write the document in three sections: 1) Background and recommended change, 2) proposed language, and 3) previous ordinance.

### Ordinance 15 Annual Registration of Vacant Dwellings and Registration Fee

The first recommendation for this ordinance is to *“Clarify and simplify the definitions of “occupied” and “vacant.”* John will provide the language that he would prefer.

The Temporary Occupancy recommendation intends to address the problem of a leaseholder occupying a house for a very short period each year and claiming that the house is therefore not vacant. John suggested that this problem can be addressed by including in the definition of “occupied” a statement that “temporary residence is not considered occupancy if the person did not intend to continue to reside in or use the dwelling.”

The current treatment of ADUs in terms of occupancy appear to be too harsh. The purpose of the vacancy fee is to **promote engagement in the community and safety**. All ADUs associated with a leasehold do not necessarily need to be used as dwelling to meet the goals of safety and engagement. The recommendation expands the definition of “occupied.”. The recommendation is to *“Delete the existing provisions relating to ADUs in the definitions of “occupied” and “vacant” and add two provisions: 1) that if a dwelling includes a primary dwelling and an incorporated or attached ADU and either the primary dwelling or the ADU is occupied, then both shall be deemed occupied; and 2) that if a property includes three or more dwellings, all of the dwellings shall be deemed occupied if the majority of dwellings are occupied.”*

Kate raised the question about decertification of an ADU if it was not going to be used as a dwelling. She explained that decertification would be complicated. For example, if a kitchen needed to be added to create an ADU, it might need to be removed to decertify the ADU. John’s recommendation suggests that the use of an ADU for a purpose other than as a dwelling should still be considered occupancy. Kate suggested that an ADU that was not being used as a residence should be required to be used for some other purpose such a studio or be in the process of renovation and this would address the safety issue. This idea is covered by John’s recommendation.

Regarding the waiver of registration fee, the current ordinance allows a one-time waiver. Everyone on the committee assumed that the waiver would a yearly waiver. If a longer time were needed a new waiver would be required and should be allowed.

## Policies

Bev reported that the current Forest Stewardship Policy was approved at TA in March 2008. One part of the policy (IIA2c) that is posted on the Arden webpage should not be included in the policy. This section was specifically removed from the proposed policy by a vote at the Town Assembly meeting in March 2008. This section will be removed. The Forest Committee plans to add a community education objective to the policy. In addition, the committee would like to change the section on tree removal. Currently, the policy states that if a resident thinks that a tree in the forest may cause damage to their house or property, they may have it removed with the permission of the Forest Committee. The current committee does not agree with this and thinks that any tree removals should be arranged by the Forest committee. A resident who thinks that a tree may damage their property can petition the Forest Committee who will evaluate the health of the tree and have it removed if necessary. Finally, a statement about the use of pesticides will be added to the policy. The Forest Committee will have a revised Forest Stewardship Policy ready for presentation at the June TA meeting.

The Arden webpage has a list of policies. The subcommittee will review these. Many of them are Budget Committee policies and Financial Policies. Committee members agreed that we will check with the committee that we were assigned earlier to make sure that all the policies for our committees are in the policies link on the webpage. Liz Resko sent John a list of all resolutions which we will go through to see if any of these resolutions should be written down as policies. We plan to develop a "policy on policies" which will define the criterion for writing down a policy.

New policies that probably need to be created include an employee policy, and a policy on contracts.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43.