



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – July 26, 2023 Agenda Item 4

Work Session

Ordinance Amending Chapter 6.16 (Landlord-Tenant Relations relating to Tenant Displacement) and Chapter 6.36 (Unsafe Buildings-Public Nuisance Abatement)

Recommended Council Action

Approve the proposed changes to City Code Chapters 6.16 and 6.36 to better outline City requirements when rental units are condemned.

Context with Key Issues

The proposed ordinance adds language to Chapter 6.16 (Landlord-Tenant Relations) and removes the language that currently exists in Chapter 6.36 (Unsafe Buildings-Public Nuisance Abatement). The ordinance defines two types of displaced tenants, temporarily displaced tenants (those who will be able to move back into the unit within 30 days), and permanently displaced tenants (those who will not be able to return to the unit within 30 days). The new language sets out requirements of property owners in providing displaced tenants with assistance or housing in the event that they are displaced due to the condemnation of the building.

On July 19, 2023, City staff held a work session with the Council on the proposed amendments. Council requested a revision to clarify that landlords can require tenants to use their renter's insurance (if they have it) first for immediate housing and temporary displacement before the landlord would be required to step in. Staff have added new language to this effect. Council also expressed a desire to solicit comment from the public on the proposed ordinance. Staff propose posting the proposed ordinance on the website along with a brief description and contact information for the public to comment. Staff will also email landlords and tenant groups about the proposed ordinance and include a notice in the Takoma Insider. This process would be similar to the public comment process for administrative regulations. Staff anticipate opening the comment period July 31, 2023 and closing it August 30, 2023.

Council Priority

Advancing a Community of Belonging, Community Development for an Improved and Equitable Quality of Life

Environmental Considerations

The ordinance addresses existing buildings which have been condemned or deemed unlivable, therefore, there are no environmental considerations.

Fiscal Considerations

This ordinance has no direct impact on the FY24 budget. However, it is anticipated that in the event of a condemnation the City could use Emergency Assistance Funds (if available) to provide initial housing and recoup the cost after.

Racial Equity Considerations

The ordinance will affect renter households in the City by providing them with greater protections in the event of an event which renders their apartment uninhabitable. According to the 2021 American Community Survey 5-year estimates for the City; 83% of renter householders are Non-White, while owner households are 76% White. Renter households also have fewer financial resources. The median renter household income is \$46,000 compared to \$170,000 for an owner-occupied household.

Attachments and Links

[July 19, 2023 Council Memo](#)

Draft Ordinance

Presentation