

Rental Research Stakeholder Meeting Minutes

August 4th, 2015

Julie Banks- Chair Public Safety Committee

- Brief Introductions

Melissa Whittstruck- Office of Neighborhood Services, Moderator

- Ground Rules

Jackie Caro and Sarah Kintner- Office of Neighborhood Services, Rental Unit Data

- Explained how the assessor 5+ unit category was clarified by getting meter counts per parcel through Avista (Caddey calculates the graph/mapped data has +/- 3% margin of error)
- Breakdown of unit numbers and percentages per category clarified
- Age of rental units determined from assessor data. Assessor uses date of construction/construction permits to determine age. Clarified that unpermitted work would not be shown. Heather Trautman explained that the County requested permit information from the city to assist with valuation. Also explained that the data and synthesis is a huge step forward in looking at rental housing stock and has not been previously available.
- Clarified the difference between census age of housing stock and the presentation data
- Patty Webster pointed out the 3% margin of error would add to the number of renters not owners.
- Clarification that the conditions map represents 1-4 units ONLY. Trying to get it for the 5+ but it will take more time. County collects this data every 4 years.

Patty Slider and Heather Wallace- Health District

- Advocate and educate- impact quality housing has on public health
- Housing and the effects on health on child development
- Adverse health effects of low quality housing environments (biological, chemical, heat, cold, moisture)
- Emotional and behavioral development strongly correlated to quality of housing
- Spokane area specific health impacts
- Poor quality or unrepaired structural components: broken, missing, unrepaired
- Poor quality housing: learning success and educational attainment- Lead, behavioral, psychological, educational attainment, etc
- Local info: 2009- Odds Against Tomorrow. Life expectancy based on neighborhood 84.03(Southgate) vs 66.17(Riverside)
- Hillyard report- availability and quality of housing stock in Hillyard neighborhood
- Public Health Nurse: do NOT do home inspections, assess health and home safety, parent-child relationship, educate: parenting, healthy, child development, safety, Advocate
- Uniform Law Commission: renters typically feel powerless in negotiations with landlords whether in luxury apt or shack
- Understanding of rights as renters
- Relationship between quality of housing and health
- CDC: Advancing Healthy Homes- 8 characteristics that qualify a healthy home: dry, clean, pest free, safe, contaminant free, well ventilated, well maintained, thermally controlled
- Costs to society: health and education and welfare

- Recommendations based on research: how to collect data? Sounds and collaborative data, well managed units provided for better health and safety conditions, housing assessments for low income residents, license and inspections program
- Using social and specialized training to assess
- Ensure Housing Quality: World Health Org, CDC, HUD all acknowledge connection between housing and health. Refinement of housing code, dev. Of national building standards, inclusionary zoning: mixed income neighborhoods
- Rental education training: landlord-tenant education/understanding, renter training programs, CPTED, property management training
- Registry and inspection program

Stakeholder Questions and Comments

Q- Studies comparing health differences in inspected public housing units (subsidized)?

A- All voucher programs require

Q- Health issues- is it about ownership v. renter or is it more about income?

A- Income is one of the social determinants of health

Q- For public health, what is the minimum standard that we will require?

Q - Society is bearing the costs... more info on class action suit for lead exposure, Hillyard study?

Q- Education piece- three prong. How do you see the health dept contributing to the education, breaking the cycle, prevent from getting to the substandard place?

A -Multi pronged approach- potential to partner with social group (SNAP)

Q - What can we do to motivate landlords?

A- hoping we would development an ordinance

Melissa- focused on research, not an outcome

Q - Income as a factor- cannot afford to buy home. In addition to current recommendations would you recommend a just cause eviction so that a tenant won't be evicted for requesting repairs?

A- The recommendations did not touch on eviction

Q - Qualifications for renting: poor housing v. public housing. If we get aggressive in standards what happens to those people if we remove their housing? Imposing standards that make it no longer economically beneficial to the owner?

GAP Identified