



CITIZENS ADVISORY  
COUNCIL FOR HOUSING MATTERS



Reply to: 44 Capitol Avenue, Suite 301  
Hartford, CT 06106  
860-278-5688 x203

**Next meeting**

**2:00 pm**

**Wednesday, June 17, 2009**

Burroughs Community Center  
2470 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport

Please mark your calendars now.

Minutes of March 18, 2009 Meeting of the Citizens Advisory Council for Housing Matters

Attendees: Jeffrey Hammer, Richard DeParle, Carl Lupinacci, David Pels, Raphael Podolsky, Judith R. Dicine, Sandra Desrosiers and Patricia Walker

Meeting was called to order at 2:14 pm by R. Podolsky

1. Preliminary Matters

- a. The agenda was amended to include items 3(a)(ii) Development of a Statewide Housing Code and 4(a) Potential termination of Citizens Advisory Council for Housing Matters. The amended agenda was approved
- b. R. DeParle made a motion to approve the minutes of December 17, 2008, D. Pels seconded, and the minutes were unanimously approved.

2. Follow-up to 2009 Biennial report.

- a. Meeting with Kevin Kane and Paul Murray – R. Podolsky reported that the Council's recommendations were reviewed and discussed. Mr. Kane and Mr. Murray agree to consider the Council's recommendations to formalize a unified structure of prosecutor supervision through the Chief Supervisory Housing Prosecutor, to communicate to the State's Attorneys a list of types of cases that should be referred to housing prosecutors, and to review the draft Police Training Manual and send it to the State's Attorneys for comment and feedback. Judith Dicine intends to use the draft manual as a training document in the interim pending final approval. Mr. Murray agreed to explore the inclusion of a regular landlord-tenant section in new prosecutor training.
- b. Meeting with Chief Court Administrator Barbara Quinn and Deputy Chief Court Administrator Patrick Carroll - R. Podolsky reported this meeting was postponed and not yet rescheduled.

### 3. Housing Court Operations Reports

#### a. Prosecution Issues – J. Dicine

- i. Variations between housing courts in numbers of criminal prosecutions - The Council discussed possible contributing factors to vast differences in the number of Housing Code Enforcement criminal cases brought forward in the larger jurisdictions across the state. It was noted that the Hartford Judicial District has the fewest code enforcement cases, the majority of which were generated in larger suburban towns such as East Hartford and Manchester rather than in Hartford. J. Dicine said that her office may soon have the capacity to provide specific case generation statistics to further this analysis. J. Dicine will contact R. Podolsky with more details as they develop, probably before the end of March. She will also ask housing prosecutors, at their next meeting, to estimate the number of criminal cases they receive from each town in their jurisdiction per year and to report back to the Council at the June meeting.
- ii. Development of a Statewide Housing Code – J. Dicine reported that a task force has been actively working on the creation of a Statewide Housing Code, similar to the formats of the Statewide Building, Fire and Health codes that already exist. The principal unresolved issues are whether the code should be mandatory for all towns or merely a model to be adopted, which state agency will be responsible for the code, and whether towns will be allowed to add additional provisions to the code applying just to their own towns. A draft of a Statewide Housing Code has been brought to the Commissioner of Public Safety, the Commissioner of Public Health and the Chief State's Attorney. Although there was no formal commitment, the reaction was favorable. The Council was generally supportive of a uniform Statewide Housing Code.
- iii. Other issues. None

#### b. Clerks' Office Issues

- i. Explanation of proceedings at call of the calendar. - Tabled
- ii. Availability of interpreters – Prior to the meeting Chief Housing Court Clerk Suzanne Colasanto reported to R. Podolsky via telephone that the New Haven Housing Court can get interpreters as needed. J. Hammer reported that Hartford Housing Court shares a Spanish speaking interpreter with the Community Court and the Small Claims Court. Judges Gilligan and Norko would like to get a dedicated interpreter for Housing Court. A phone service (Language Line) provides adequate interpreter services for other languages but is cost prohibitive to use for the quantity of Spanish speaking litigants. In the absence of evidence that there is a substantial problem, the matter was tabled indefinitely.
- iii. Other issues– None

#### c. Housing Specialist Issues

- i. Use of non-law school interns in mediation programs- tabled.
- ii. Other issues. None

4. Other Business. R. Podolsky
  - a. Governor Rell's recommendation to eliminate redundant councils, boards and commissions. R. Podolsky reported that the Citizens Advisory Council is among 62 councils, boards and commissions being considered for termination in response to a proposal from the Governor. R. Podolsky testified to the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee at a public hearing held March 16<sup>th</sup> the Council's significance and informed that Committee that the State incurs zero additional costs associated with this Council. R. Podolsky recommended that Council members who feel the Council should be continued should contact the GAE Committee.
  - b. Other issues - None
5. Meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Sandra Desrosiers, Co-Secretary