

Work Session of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on February 6, 2024 at 6:00 PM, Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

Before calling the meeting to order, **Mayor Rusty Paul** apologized for cutting off **Le'Dor Milteer, of The Empowerment Workshop**, while speaking at the February 1, 2024 Dakoro Edwards Art Exhibit / Gallery opening at City Springs. When you make a mistake in private you deal with it in private and when you make a mistake in public you deal with it publicly. It will not happen again.

I. Staff Discussion Items

Mayor Rusty Paul called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

A. 2024-022 Multifamily Housing Inspection Program Progress

Eden Freeman, City Manager, said this item is a carry forward from last Tuesday's Council Retreat. **Jonathan Livingston, Building Official/Building Department Manager**, will provide Council with an update on the implementation of the City's Multifamily Housing Inspection Program.

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said this ordinance was a joint collaboration with the Building Department, Code Enforcement, and the Fire Marshal's Office, and took over a year to develop. We tried to consolidate all the various codes sections and incorporate necessary new code sections based on historical data from Fire and other data.

We reviewed statistical data and fire trends we repeatedly saw at some of these apartment complexes, and determined we needed to be proactive in some things to minimize the spread of fire and limit damage. We added automatic door closures, vertical chase protection, and non-combustible exterior siding. We found with the vertical chase protection in particular, the fires usually originate inside a unit and go up the cavities in the walls, towards the attic. It then spreads and the entire roof can be gone in about twenty minutes.

Intumescent paint was the catalyst for this ordinance. There were some limitations with the paint, and we decided that when it was time for the paint to be reapplied, we would give the property owners a couple options. They could reapply the paint, install a residential sprinkler system, or install a fire barrier which is like a fire wall. They can install a fire wall in the attic because the problem with apartments is once the attic goes, so does the whole building. Working with the Fire Marshal, we decided to install a fire barrier between two units to contain and isolate the fire in that specific space. We also put hatches in the public corridors, for easy access. For part of this process, we collaborated with GIS and specifically with the Revenue Department to coordinate some of the licensing requirements, and to overall match our inspection needs for the City of Sandy Springs.

Council approved the Multifamily Rental Housing (MRH) Ordinance on September 5th, 2023 and we have been working on implementing it for a few months. According to statistics, there are about 96 MRH properties. There was a different number before because some properties had multiple parcels and showed as two for instance, and to simplify, we combined them to one apartment complex. Of the total number, 90 are rental properties and 6 are Retirement Independent Living. Assisted Living and Memory Care are not part of the MRH Ordinance because they already provide some type of 24-hour care oversight over the entire property.

MRH Property Statistics

- Approximately 1,300 structures
- Over 25,000 rental units
- 70% of apartments are 20 years old or older
- Automatic Sprinkler Systems
 - 47% do not have an automatic sprinkler system
 - 25% are partially sprinklered
 - 28% are fully sprinklered

Education and training was a big part of what we did since this ordinance was approved. We have specific Property Manager Training and have already given four seminars. They start at 9:00 am and end about 12:00 pm depending on the Q & A. To date, 73 out of 96 properties attended the training seminar, and we are working on the remainder to come for a makeup-session. Our goal is to have 100% attendance. Alongside this, is the Certified Building Inspector (CBI) Training. This is specific to inspectors to go inside the apartment units. We had four of those seminars in October, November, December, and January. To date, 16 inspectors represent about 10 separate CBI companies with more expected in the future.

Certified Building Inspector (CBI) Training

- We developed a standard checklist that all CBI must use that will allow the City to run statistical data and trends
 - Developed from reviewing and combining previous CBI reports, identifying common deficiencies, and feedback from the CBIs
 - Consists of 98 questions organized by inspection category

The image shows a sample of the Certified Building Inspector (CBI) Rental Unit Inspection Report form. The form is titled "CERTIFIED BUILDING INSPECTOR RENTAL UNIT INSPECTION REPORT" and includes a "PROPERTY ADDRESS" field. It contains sections for "PROPERTY INFORMATION" and "INSPECTION INFORMATION". The "DEFICIENCY REPORT" section is a table with columns for "Category", "Deficiency", "Pass/Fail/NA", and "Inspector Initials". The form is designed to be used by CBI inspectors to record inspection results and identify deficiencies.

When the standard checklist was developed, the software vendor encountered a problem and was not able to accommodate our needs for the new checklist. Fortunately, **Bridget Lawlor, GIS Manager** and her team quickly developed an in-house location-based inspection software specifically for the CBI. It is a pass/fail/NA report and photos can be attached. It is automated and eliminates the CBI from having to generate reports.

Future Training Seminars

- Quarterly Property Manager Training seminars throughout the year for any new property managers and/or recertifications
 - February 2024 (Make-Up Seminar TBD)
 - Tuesday, April 9, 2024
 - Tuesday, July 9, 2024
 - Tuesday, October 8, 2024
- Quarterly CBI Training seminars throughout the year for any new CBI inspectors and/or recertifications
 - Tuesday, April 16, 2024
 - Tuesday, July 16, 2024
 - Tuesday, October 15, 2024

Current MRH Deadline Summary

- All 2023 inspections were required to be completed by December 31, 2023
 - Only the 20% required by the previous code was required to be completed in 2023
 - The 2023 inspections apply for the 2024 Occupational Tax Certificate Year
- 2023 Occupational Tax Certificate expired December 31, 2023
- 2024 Occupational Tax Certificate must be filed no later than March 31, 2024

2024 Occupational Tax Certificate Requirements

1. 2024 Occupational Tax Certificate Application
2. Property Manager Certification issued by the City prior to March 31, 2024
 - Property Manager must be physically located on the property or assigned to the property
3. Certificate of Compliance issued by the City for the 2023 inspections
 - Only the 20% required by the previous code is required to be completed in 2023
4. Current Certificate of Insurance

Once all requirements are met, their business license is issued.

Councilmember John Paulson said the City passed the intumescent paint requirement years ago and it was a phased-in approach. Have we reached the point where all buildings have a one-time application of it?

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said most have come into compliance. The deadline was November and there are a few that have not done it, but we gave them an extension if for example there were logistical issues, and an installer was sick.

Councilmember Paulson asked does the paint have to be reapplied once on?

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said yes. The intumescent paint lasts approximately five years. It is an active system and is dependent on installation, brand, thickness, and more. It has been more than five years since that first install for most, and we provide other options as it

only activates when there is a fire. They can continue to reapply the intumescent paint, come up with a residential sprinkler system, or install the fire barrier in the attic.

Councilmember Paulson asked are CBI private contractors?

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said correct. They are an independent third-party hired by the property manager.

Councilmember Paulson asked are there enough of them that this can get accomplished?

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said they are the same group doing it as before. More are coming and some are starting to staff up because of this.

Councilmember Tibby DeJulio said when the City passed the paint requirement, putting canisters on range hoods was also discussed. Has anything been done?

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said yes. That has been in place for a while. There is no statistical data, but we are positive the number of fires decreased because of that.

Councilmember DeJulio asked was that a more economical solution than painting or sprinkling?

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said they are two different things. The painting is for exposed wood, mainly the attic. Any exposed wood must be protected because it is flammable in case of a fire. You may be referring to canisters used with appliances to minimize cooking fires that can instantly engulf a kitchen in minutes. If there is a cooking fire, the canister drops the same dry suppressant that is inside fire extinguishers and puts out the fire. At our seminars, we showed photos of discharged canisters that worked well. The canister is about the size of a tuna can and there are different types. They can be purchased in pairs on Amazon for example for about \$70.

Councilmember Jody Reichel asked are most apartment complexes complying? If not, what happens? Are they all operating under a business license?

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said Revenue can provide information on whether or not they have their business license, but they will not have one until all other requirements are met. Most complexes have gotten their final certificate of compliance for 2023 which is required for a 2024 business license.

Councilmember Melissa Mular asked is refresher CBI training offered?

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said yes. Codes and staff change, and new inspectors will come on board. This is why we require an annual training for both the property manager and the CBI. This was just pushed out and we have not yet figured out if the recertification is going to be a full class, or a video followed by a quiz for example.

Councilmember Mular said this presentation included a percentage breakdown of the complexes by the number of sprinklers. Is there a list of apartment complexes by district to understand which have better coverage than others?

Building Official/Building Department Manager Livingston said we can isolate the data by district and provide this to Council.

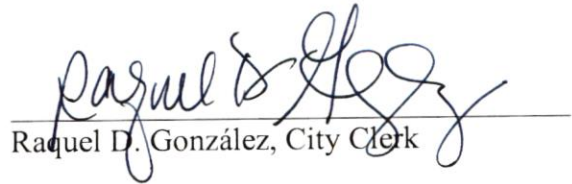
II. City Council Discussion Items

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.

Approved: February 20, 2024



Russell K. Paul, Mayor



Raquel D. González, City Clerk