

CITY OF SMYRNA

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Council

From: Rusty Martin, AICP, Community Development Director

Date: February 12, 2021

CC: Joe Bennett – Interim City Administrator

RE: Multi-family Housing Inspection Program – Covid-19 Extension

BACKGROUND

Under the City's Property Maintenance Code (Chapter 80 of the Code of Ordinances), the City requires multi-family developments to inspect a portion of their units every year prior to the renewal of their business license. The inspection program applies to all property owners of multi-family rental dwellings or multi-family rental units within the city that receive income for use of four or more such dwellings or units and meet the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 48-13-5 for having a location or office within the city. The property owners are required to provide inspection reports from certified inspectors covering interior inspections of no less than 20 percent of the multi-family rental units within the 12-month period immediately preceding the date of the certification. The property owners shall submit these inspection reports annually with their business license renewal. Such subsequent inspection reports shall cover interior inspections of at least 20 percent of the units, provided all units shall be inspected, at a minimum, every five years.

STAFF COMMENTS

Due to Covid-19, the property owners have expressed trouble in getting their inspectors access to the units due to fear from the resident of potential exposure to the disease.

There are 32 apartment developments in the City.

- 9 (or 28%) of those developments have submitted inspection reports and have paid business license renewal.
- 5 (or 15%) of those developments have submitted payment, but have not submitted inspection reports.
- 18 (or 56%) of those developments have not submitted payment, nor inspection reports.

Community Development is recommending **approval** of the following actions to support the multi-family developments through the pandemic:

- Allow the property owners to spread the 2020 inspections over the next two years.
- If a property owner decides to defer the 2020 inspections to other years, they would be required to complete inspections for 30% of the units the next two years (2021 & 2022).
- The program shall only apply to the required 2020 inspections. Required inspections for subsequent years shall not be deferred.

The proposed actions are not a waiver of the inspection requirement, but it allows for the deferment of the inspections until they can be completed safely. In addition, these actions would keep the inspection of all the units within the development on the same inspection schedule over a five-year period. The Fire Marshal's Office and the Community Development Code Enforcement Division will continue to do the yearly exterior inspections of the property.