

LARA WEISIGER

From: Angela Pallatto Hockabout <grenadinegirl@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 28, 2015 3:22 PM
To: Trish Spencer; Frank Matarrese; Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft; Tony Daysog; Jim Oddie; DEBBIE POTTER; City Clerk
Subject: November 4th Renters Workshop

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor and Members of the City Council,

I dearly wish that I could attend the renter's workshop, but I will be attending a board meeting for my son's preschool that evening. As a sitting board member I cannot miss this meeting. I wish I could be at both places at once.

You know me for taking a moderate perspective. That moderation ended when I saw rents go up even higher over the summer, seeing people thrown out of their homes for 50% rent increases.

I was hopeful during last year's housing discussion process and the passage of the Rent Review ordinance that landlords would understand that renters have a voice and that the power was in their hands whether or not Alameda got a rent control ordinance. Yet over the summer we saw more section 8 tenants lose their homes and there was nothing that landlords could do to accommodate those poor folks, the most needy in our community.

Then I realized even with the passage of Site A, that it would only be the lucky or the privileged who got to live at those new houses and that the majority of renters are still hanging on by a thread, just a single rent increase away from having to leave their homes, city, community, family and friends. Site A is still important and still needs to be built, but renters still need to be protected.

It became apparent to me that rent control is the only tool that will stop landlords from raising rents in a way that displaces residents. It can be enacted quickly and bring immediate relief to stressed out renters.

Without a major shift in the perception of housing development region wide, without serious innovation in how we house people, home prices are only going to continue to rise. Landlords stand to make billions on those increases as long as we refuse to build the housing that our local economic engine requires. As such, I am not concerned about the income of landlords, the current increased rates and the natural turnover rate are more than enough to compensate a landlord and receive a fair return on an investment.

The city of Alameda is in a position to become a regional leader on fair housing. I hope to see the city council take the following actions:

- Enact an immediate moratorium so that renters can have a chance at staying in their homes while solutions are worked out.
- Establish strong low rental increase caps that make yearly rent increases manageable for most households.
- Enact an Eviction Control measure that prevents landlords from displacing folks at will, reimburses families for moving expenses and guarantees the return of their security deposit unless the landlord can prove willful intent to destroy property.
- Take a formal stand against the Costa Hawkins laws that limit the breadth of rent control and prevent single family home renters from benefiting from rental increase caps.
- Take a formal stand on a possible BART station in Alameda.

- Reinstate the zoning for North Housing.
- Approve future infill housing developments along with their coinciding increases to the affordable housing stock.
- Allow Ron Cowan to build 80 homes on the current site of the Harbor Bay Club, AND negotiate a deal for him to meet the current 25% affordable housing standard.

Thank you so much for listening to renters. I look forward to seeing solutions that inspire a region wide fair housing movement.

Sincerely,

Angela Hockabout

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Angela P Hockabout

Editor, KnitLuck

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