

February 24, 2014

Dear Mansfield Town Council,

At the last town council meeting on February 10th, I asked a seemingly straight forward question of our Deputy Mayor Paul Shapiro . I asked him what his definition of blight was as well as his objective, that was discussed in the January 27th council goal setting session. Mr. Shapiro said that he wasn't prepared to answer the question and referred to the now razed commercial plaza once owned by UConn, that made way for the now Storrs Center. This was clearly an answer to skirt the real question at hand. It took Counselor Wasssmundt , during the council's reports and comment period, to get Deputy Mayor Shapiro to clarify his definition of blight that he referred to in the goal setting session.

I too knocked on many doors of our citizens in town during this last election cycle and got an earful. Our citizens want an honest transparent government, a government that we can participate in. Please do not ignore your citizen's dear council; we may hold the solutions to the very problems you wish to address.

I am not here to simply criticize the actions of the council; I am here to offer potential solutions.

I lease more than sixty apartments for my family business and we have a measured success in cohabited housing, we rent to working people, families, graduate students, and undergraduate students. We offer competitive pricing, at least for now.

With taxes, insurance, and other expenses rising quickly we aren't in a position to take on any extra costs, costs like: inspection fees, parking regulations and further regulation by the town council. We price our apartments to make housing available to all demographics in our town without bias, this is the law! Further

regulation will increase the cost of renting to our citizens and will limit renting our houses and apartments only to those who can afford a higher rent, THE UCONN STUDENT.

The council must be careful on regulating the housing that surrounds UConn, you may be part of the problem not the solution. The nuisance ordinance is a common sense ordinance that places the burden on the true offender, the citizen that is affecting the quality of life in a neighborhood. Creating rental zones that increase the cost of doing business raises the rents! The cost of housing directly around the university has soared and it seems that only the UConn student can afford it! I hear it every day.

Any consideration of new ordinances, rental zones, or regulations should be directed toward offending landlords or tenants, not those that are working hard at keeping affordable, peaceful, and diverse housing.

Brian Coleman

Centre St.

We on the Town Council have a lot on our plates. Yet, for the past few meetings, a series of issues about parliamentary procedure and the conduct of meetings have taken up some of our time. I am now going to address those issues. I don't expect everyone to agree with me, but when I finish this statement, you will know how I expect business to be conducted going forward.

As for messages passed from the audience to Council members: it is not permitted by our Council rules or Robert's Rules of Order and I will not allow it in the future. The public is welcome to address the Council at the beginning of each meeting and to provide a copy of a statement to the Town Clerk. During the meeting, members of the Council are "on their own." They were elected to represent the people of Mansfield and Council members' comments and questions must be their own. Members of the public may not provide messages to Council members during meetings and I am directing the Town Clerk not to deliver any messages to Council members during the meetings. During a meeting, the Town Manager may receive information from staff, which he will share with the chair or Council members as appropriate.

I recognize that I have not been perfectly consistent in past meetings. I believe that I said on one occasion that messages can be delivered to a Council member through the Town Clerk. Upon reflection, I should not have said that and will not permit it going forward.

I would also like to take the opportunity to address another issue that has come up. We allow guests of the Council to come to the front table for the purpose of making a presentation, and/or answer questions. That privilege does not apply to others in the audience and I should not have allowed a member of the audience, who was not properly identified as a presenter, to make a comment during a Council meeting. Going forward, I will not recognize anyone who is not on the Council, with the exception of those who are identified as present to make a presentation and/or answer questions.

Submitted by Mayor Elizabeth C. Paterson