

REGULAR MEETING – MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

August 8, 2016

Mayor Paul M. Shapiro called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber of the Audrey P. Beck Building.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Kochenburger, Marcellino, Moran, Raymond, Ryan, Sargent, Shaiken, Shapiro  
Excused: Keane

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Shaiken moved and Mr. Ryan seconded to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2016 special meeting as presented. The motion passed with all in favor except Mr. Kochenburger who abstained. Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Ryan seconded to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2016 regular meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Mr. Kochenburger viewed the meeting online.

II. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

Rebecca Aubrey, Olsen Drive, spoke in favor of the housing code amendments as a way to help preserve the quality of family life in Mansfield. (Statement attached)

Martha Kelly, Bundy Lane resident and Board of Education member but speaking as an individual, identified and commented on the role of the four entities involved in this rental housing issue. (Statement attached)

Justin Gordon, Dog Lane, spoke against the proposed housing code amendments noting situations where enforcement of the ordinance is a safety risk. (Statement attached)

Julia Sherman, Pinewoods Road resident, long term teacher and landlord, thanked Council members for their tireless work. Ms. Sherman commented that 18 to 20 year olds benefit from the supervision and advice of Resident Assistants on campus and supports regulations that zone out temporary fraternity houses.

Joan Seliger Sidney, Lynwood Road, commented on the changes in her neighborhood as a result of single family homes being turned into rentals and of her concerns for the future stability of the neighborhoods in the Town. (Statement attached)

Jody Bailey, Old School House Road, described the changes in her neighborhood due to homes becoming rental properties and her concern that future conversions would undermine the stability of the neighborhood. (Statement attached)

Rebecca Shaefer, Echo Road, remarked that the comments on the submitted landlord petition were not about how tenants could be better neighbors but about how they were being denied their right to party. (Statement attached. Submitted material regarding Village of Belle Terre vs. Borass will be included in the September 12, 2016 packet as a communication.)

John Murphy, Browns Road, spoke in support of the proposed housing code amendments noting that most of those speaking in opposition have a personal financial interest in maintaining the status quo and urged the University of Connecticut to develop the Depot Campus as a long term solution to the problem. (Statement attached)

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Craig Marcus, Coventry resident, read a letter from attorney Diane Whitney who represents a number of landlords and has offered to help craft a solution; submitted an article from the Chronicle which was based on information from the Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation Group; and submitted a letter and accompanying tenant letter from Ryan McDonald. (Letters attached. Article will be listed as a communication in the September 12, 2016 packet)

Ted Panagopolis, Rhode Island resident, commented that he lives in Westerly RI and has to put up with living in a vacation town. Likewise, Mansfield residents live in a college town and should expect to be subject to student behaviors. Mr. Panagopolis stated that it is against the law to fight landlords because they make money and urged all sides to meet and discuss the issues.

Dean Ravanola, Storrs Road, read a letter from Gregory Nicholson which objected to limiting non-owner occupied rentals to 3 unrelated individuals Mr. Ravanola expressed his agreement with the sentiments of the letter. (Letter attached)

Beverly Sims, Northwood Road, commented that the answer to neighborhoods changing due to increased rentals is not the building of large off campus housing complexes. Ms. Sims urged UConn to consider the Depot Campus as a location for additional dorms.

### III. REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

Assistant Town Manager Maria Capriola presented the Town Manager's report

### IV. REPORTS AND COMMENTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Ms. Raymond requested that the email received by Council members regarding the possible regulatory changes to how Metropolitan Planning Organizations are established and operate be discussed. Mayor Shapiro suggested the subject be on the next Council agenda.

### V. OLD BUSINESS

#### 1. Proposed Amendments to the Mansfield Housing Code and Related Ordinances

Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Ryan seconded, effective August 8, 2016, to approve the proposed amendments to the Mansfield Housing Code and related ordinances, which amendments shall be effective 21 days after publication in a newspaper having circulation within the Town of Mansfield.

Mr. Shaiken moved and Mr. Sargent seconded to divide the question. The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Shapiro described the three motions which are now under consideration:

- 1) Amendments to Section 901.1 of the Housing Code and Section 152-4 of the Landlord Registration Ordinance ensuring that the definition of an owner-occupied dwelling is consistent with the provisions in the Mansfield Off Street Parking Ordinance
- 2) Amendments to Section 901.2 of the Housing Code requiring a dwelling unit to be in compliance with all pertinent laws, ordinances and regulations prior to the issuances of a rental certificate.
- 3) Amendments to Section 404.5 of the Housing Code to ensure consistency with the Mansfield Zoning Regulations

Mr. Sargent moved to amendment Motion 1 reducing the percentage of ownership from 50% to 25%. The motion was seconded by Ms. Raymond. The motion to amend failed with all in opposition except Mr. Sargent who voted in favor of the amendment. Motion 1, as originally presented, passed with all in favor except Mr. Sargent who voted in opposition. Motion 2 passed unanimously. Motion 3 passed with all in favor except Mr. Sargent who voted in opposition. Mayor Shapiro urged all interested parties to attend the meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee on Rental Regulation and Enforcement.

## VI. NEW BUSINESS

### 2. Cancellation of August 22, 2016 Meeting

Mr. Ryan moved and Mr. Shaiken seconded, to cancel the August 22, 2016 regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council. Motion passed unanimously.

### 3. Ad Hoc Committee on Naming of the Town Square

Mayor Shapiro moved and Ms. Raymond seconded, to appoint Councilors Ryan, Marcellino and Keane to the Ad Hoc Committee on Naming of the Town Square, which is charged with identifying an appropriate name for the town square for the Town Council's review and consideration. Motion passed unanimously.

## VII. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

Mr. Ryan, Chair of the Finance Committee, reported that implementation of the Fraud Risk Assessment was discussed at tonight's meeting and that the Fund Balance is now at 8.8%

Ms. Moran reminded members that the survey for the Town Manager's review will be open until Wednesday at noon.

Mayor Shapiro, having voted in the affirmative on Item 3, Ad Hoc Committee on Naming of Town Square, moved and Mr. Kochenburger seconded to reopen the motion designating the members of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Shapiro moved and Ms. Raymond seconded to substitute Mr. Sargent for Ms. Keane as a member of the Committee.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Moran moved and Mr. Sargent seconded to add Item 3a, Discussion of Proposed Changes to Metropolitan Planning Organizations to the agenda.

The motion passed unanimously and the Director of Planning was invited to discuss the issue.

### 3a. Proposed Changes to Metropolitan Planning Organizations

Ms. Painter presented the information she was able to garner in her discussions with CRCOG staff members today. There are still many questions as to how these changes might affect Mansfield. Mayor Shapiro will be attending the August 10, 2016 CRCOG

Executive Committee meeting where he will express the sense of the Council and gather additional information.

VIII. DEPARTMENTAL AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

No comments offered.

IX. PETITIONS, REQUESTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

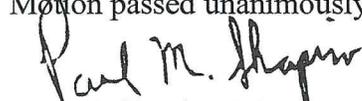
4. Petition re: Housing Rights
5. B. Coleman (07/25/16)
6. J. Hanley (07/25/16)
7. A. Hawkins (07/25/16)
8. R. McDonald (08/04/16)
9. C. Naumec (07/25/16)
10. R. Shafer (07/25/16)
11. J. Sherman (07/26/16)
12. W. Varga (07/25/16)
13. D. Whitney (08/04/16)
14. Planning and Zoning Commission re: Proposed Amendment to Zoning Regulations Regarding a Temporary and Limited Moratorium on Applications Related to Multi-Family Housing
15. M. Capriola re: Timeline – Town Manager Performance Review Process
16. M. Hart re: Appointment to Economic Development Commission
17. D. Malloy re: Crumbling Foundations Mr. Kochenburger requested this information be added to the Town's website
18. State of Connecticut Department of Transportation re: Traffic Concerns on U.S. Route 6 Mr. Shaiken noted this letter and urged anyone interested in the issue to read the communication
19. Celebrate Mansfield Festival
20. Mansfield Historical Society Summer 2016 Workshops
21. CRCOG Annual Report and Member Benefits Information
22. Connecticut Water – “Straight from the Tap”
23. Eastern Regional Tourism District Annual Review
24. Hartford Courant – ‘Officials Looking At Options For E.O. Smith’ – 7/25/16

X. FUTURE AGENDAS

No items added

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Shaiken moved and Ms. Moran seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m.  
Motion passed unanimously.

  
Paul M. Shapiro, Mayor

  
Mary Stanton, Town Clerk

August 8, 2016

August 8, 2016

Dear Members of the Mansfield Town Council:

My name is Rebecca Aubrey, and I live at 38 Olsen Drive. I am here to urge you to take action to preserve the quality of family life in Mansfield. I am an E.O. Smith graduate, and a single parent to a son who just graduated from E.O., a son at E.O., and daughter at MMS. My daughter came to the last meeting with me because I wanted to remind you that in addition to UConn and its students, there are also families who live in Mansfield. She is biracial and stayed home tonight because she felt uncomfortable with the racially insensitive comments made at the last meeting, but I still came to speak on behalf of my family and give a personal face to what is at stake here.

I have two main points. The first is a response to the accusation that rental ordinances are discriminatory. It is the duty of government to develop and enforce laws that regulate behavior, in order to protect the wellbeing of its citizens. Individuals make choices that come with regulations attached. When I choose to drive my car, I accept that I have to pay for insurance and follow traffic laws, or I will be fined. When I chose to install a pellet stove, I had to get a building permit and a town official came into the privacy of my home to inspect it. When I chose to become a teacher, I accepted mandated reporter regulations that include fines of \$500 to \$2500 if I do not report suspected child abuse. These regulations are put into place for the wellbeing of society, and they come with the choices I make – much like choosing to run a rental housing business or to rent a home in a residential neighborhood come with regulations that are intended to maintain the safety and quality of life for the people of Mansfield.

The second point that I would like to speak to is the comment that Storrs is a college town, and that if people don't like living around students, they shouldn't live here. I disagree with just "letting go" of that area of Mansfield. More personally speaking, however, I witnessed the decline of the neighborhoods surrounding UConn, and for that reason, when I was able to buy my own first home 6 years ago, I specifically chose to NOT purchase a home in Storrs.

After my divorce 10 years ago, I had 3 major goals as a single parent: earn a teaching certificate to provide stability for my family; purchase my first home; and add to my family through foster/adoption. My sons and I went to live with my mother on Hillyndale Road in Storrs, to save money. In that time, several houses on Hillyndale transitioned over to student rentals. Parties frequently kept us awake late into the night, and my kids couldn't ride bikes in the road because of speeding cars. We – meaning the neighbors with children – panicked when we realized that Halloween would fall on the weekend, because parties made trick-or-treating – one of the hallmarks of childhood – treacherous. We asked the police if they would monitor the traffic on the road; spoke to officials at UConn; called the police about excessive noise; and tried to work with the property owners and renters. Nothing led to any improvements in our quality of life, and it has only declined further.

I earned my teaching certificate, and after years of saving money and through a first-time homebuyers program for teachers, bought a house six years ago. After seeing what happened in Storrs – the traffic, the parties, the trash – I chose to NOT buy a home there. I did want to stay in Mansfield to be close to family and to keep my kids in their schools. I was able to afford a modest, 1800 square foot home on Olsen Drive, which is located about 3 miles from campus, near the intersection of Mulberry and Chaffeeville Roads. I saw Olsen Drive as the perfect place to raise my family – it is a cul-de-sac, away from busy traffic of UConn, an easy bike ride to the library, and trails through the woods lead to the Lion's soccer fields where we spent a lot of our time. We settled in, I was licensed as a foster parent, and three years ago, we welcomed a scared little girl into our home, and she began to join in the idyllic moments of childhood and family that include basketball in the driveway, walking the dog in the woods, and riding bikes around Olsen Drive. A year and a half ago we legally became her "forever family".

One year ago, the house next door became a student rental. People shouting outside or loud parties occasionally awaken us in the night, and frequently 4-5 cars are parked at the house overnight – including one that is regularly parked in the road. Because Olsen Drive is narrow and curvy, a parked car in the road makes it dangerous for my daughter ride her bike alone now, and we had to delay her plans to start a neighborhood dog-walking business.

When I expressed my concerns about the number of cars to the owner, I was told that it is just a girlfriend who sleeps over sometimes. I responded that it is actually more frequent than "sometimes", and for several nights in a row. To this she responded, and I am quoting directly: "When we sell the house, there is always a chance that the large family would move in due to the low selling price (we had a short contract a couple of years ago with a family with 5 children who would have been teenagers and all driving by now)! And on top of that they could have had their friends over with the cars." I found this response to be an unacceptable slap in the face, and complete shrugging of responsibility.

I am horrified by how the lack of regulation in the past destroyed neighborhoods in Storrs. It was horrifying to witness what family and friends in Storrs have had to live through. Now it is horrifying to see student rentals creeping into neighborhoods like mine further from campus, knowing what could become of that if something isn't done to regulate them for the well being of Mansfield families. The Town of Mansfield has the opportunity now to learn from past mistakes and exercise its duties as government to enact regulations that regulate behavior in order to preserve the quality of life of Mansfield families.

Sincerely,

Rebecca E. Aubrey

August 8, 2016

Town Council  
Town of Mansfield  
Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building  
Four South Eagleville Road  
Mansfield, CT 06268

Council Members:

Subject: Mansfield Housing Issues

As I listened July 25 to those who spoke about the housing issues and proposed and present ordinances, I was struck by the fact that what you have in front of you is a Gordian knot. Speaking for myself, I have been a renter, a landlord in Mansfield and am now solely a residential homeowner, and I sympathize with how difficult an issue this will be to resolve.

You are dealing with four entities: (1) individuals who want to rent a home here; (2) owners – landlords -- not residing at the property they are leasing; (3) UConn, the central character, fostering a housing shortage; and (4) individuals who purchased a home in Mansfield to live in themselves. Home purchases in peaceful, well-cared-for neighborhoods are viewed as long-term investments; residents are finding their venture is tarnished because of far too many eyesores in their community.

*Re the landlords:* I can testify that to be a conscientious landlord is a lot of work. Many of Mansfield's property owners, who buy a home to lease to others, are diligent. However, there are several who diminish the efforts put forth by those who are hard working. All one has to do is drive down Hunting Lodge Road. Instead of a road of attractive, small homes with individual architectural charm, one is faced with a down-at-the-heels, unappealing neighborhood. Most of the homes have absolutely no curb appeal and are eyesores: neglected landscaping, unpainted building surfaces, mold-covered roofs, etc. If you are among landlords whose properties fit this description, step up your game: form a co-op, hire a landscaper, employ a building maintenance crew to spruce up your real estate holdings. If you take great care of your property, your tenants might also have more respect for their home.

*Re the town:* Landlords need to be part of the solution, which should neither be adversarial nor punitive. It is important that you meet with them (or designated representatives) and design appropriate measures to ensure that our neighborhoods are not blighted and also enable them to carry out their business. It is in their interest that their investments appreciate, and a run-down neighborhood hurts their property values as well. UConn also needs to be entailed in this issue.

*Re a reason for the need of off-campus housing:* Many colleges limit student off-campus housing. If UConn insisted that first-year through third-year students live on campus (unless there is a compelling reason), the demand for off-campus residency would be alleviated.

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Actually, I do not believe they have been a central part of this conversation, and they should be – because their policies have spawned a record need for renting off-campus homes. This reminds me of their stance regarding student conduct during former Spring Weekends. Because excessive partying was expected student behavior (and, reportedly, quite difficult to temper), every May the town and state spent considerable time, energy and money trying to ensure safety and some order. It was not until a tragedy occurred that UConn really put forward stringent controls which have pretty much curtailed years of out-of-hand partying. Now it is time for UConn officials to truly revise their on- and off-campus housing policies.

Thank you.



Martha Kelly  
29 Bundy Lane  
Storrs, CT 06268

Note: I am speaking as a private individual, not as an elected member of Mansfield's preK-8 Board of Education or any of its associated committees. MK

Justin Gorton  
One Dog Lane  
Storrs, CT 06268  
August 08, 2016

Paul Shapiro, Mayor  
Town of Mansfield  
Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building  
4 So Eagleville Road  
Mansfield, CT 06268

Dear Mayor Shapiro,

I'd like to again bring up the off-street parking ordinance and ask the same question I posed at the last town meeting. According to the town code's off street parking ordinance, "The town and town council finds that motor vehicle parking at numerous residential rental properties has created, on a regular and frequent basis, unsafe, blighted and congested conditions and other negative neighborhood impacts on the town." If a person visiting a rental property has too much to drink and makes the responsible decision not to drive, they could be subject to a \$90 ticket. If that person wants to avoid that \$90 and decides to drive home, they are now in a more dangerous situation than anyone would have been if the car had stayed in the driveway. What if that person got in an accident and died? All because of the possibility of a \$90 ticket. Due to this ordinance, people's lives are at risk. Do you think someone's life is worth \$90 in revenue? Not only that, but anyone on or near the road is now at risk simply because, at some point, someone thought that having a fifth car in a driveway, regardless of space, is dangerous.

Councilman Shaiken, I understand that you're currently looking for tenants to rent two of the bedrooms in your home. I'm not familiar with your driveway but your craigslist ad describes your house as, "not a party house, but friends and family are welcome." You also advertised "plenty of driveway parking." Mr. Shaiken, based on these excerpts from your advertisement, would you be okay with more than three cars in your driveway if the situation arose where that was necessary? Do you think that that's safer because you live there? Mr. Shaiken do you think that your possible future tenants are better than me? Do you think that your possible tenants should have different rights than I do simply because you also live in the house? Mr. Shaiken maybe you want to get this passed as quickly as possible so as not to inconvenience your tenants during their lease periods. Oh wait, none of these ordinances would apply to you. I find this to be a serious conflict of interest as Mr. Shaiken is able to vote on public policy that allows him to advertise certain things about his rental property that undoubtedly give him an unfair competitive advantage in the rental property market.

As the man whom Mayor Shapiro forgot about at the last town meeting mentioned, there is an article in the town code that says that non rental property residents can be subject to citation and/or fine for parking their cars on their lawn but only if there is a complaint made about it. What an excellent point. The fact that the town can go around to, what they refer to as "targeted" rental properties, and write these tickets, regardless of the receipt of a complaint is further proof of the discrimination propagated by these ordinances. What non-rental resident is going to file a complaint against a neighbor that they know for having a few cars on their lawn? Probably none. City Manager I'm sure those statistics are available and I'd love to know what they are so perhaps you'd be able to share those with us at the next town meeting. I'd also go so far to say that no students living in a rental property are going to file a complaint against a resident for that because they wouldn't be bothered by it.

I'd like to speak a little bit about how the town enforces this disgustingly unsafe ordinance.

A very good friend of mine who lives at 708 Middle Turnpike is a victim of sexual violence. She lives on the first floor and she has a spectacular view of her driveway from her bedroom. Imagine how she would feel if she saw someone taking pictures of her from outside of her house. How could you possibly be okay with putting her through that? It is inevitable that, out of the 13,481 students living in some type of off-campus housing, someone living in a rental property has been a victim of some type of sexual assault. According to the National Sexual Violence Resource Center, nearly 5% of college women are victimized during any given calendar year. If we assume that 50% of those people living off campus are women, then there are 337 women living off campus who have been sexually victimized just in the last year alone. And you think it's a good idea to potentially have people outside of one of these women's houses taking pictures? The CDC released "Prevalence and Characteristics of Sexual Violence, Stalking, and Intimate Partner Violence Victimization — National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey." In 2011, when the study was conducted, the CDC found that an estimated 15% of women had been victims of stalking at some point in their life. After extrapolation and correction for the ages of the demographic in question, you have a very similar number of women who could have been victims of stalking. Again, do you think that these people would enjoy having strangers taking pictures of the cars in their driveway and the outside of their house? I'm going to quote the town council now: "the current method of counting cars at rental properties is imperfect." That is the only part of these amendments that holds any justifiable merit. The town council's method of enforcing the ordinance is broken. The ordinance itself is broken.

The Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation Group (hereon will be referred to as MNPG) has 2 goals

- convert rental properties into single family residences
- reduce the density of rental properties in neighborhoods

The only way that these goals would have a positive impact on the majority of residents in the town of Mansfield is if UConn admitted fewer students. I'm sure we're all aware of the funding situation at the university and admitting fewer students just isn't going to happen. UConn, as the largest state school in New England, is inevitably going to continue growing in size, both in population and area. With that in mind, if the Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation Group achieves their prejudicial goals, there will be an awful lot of students that won't have anywhere to live. I'm from Pennsylvania and if I weren't able to find housing my senior year because the Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation Group achieved their actual goal of removing college students from their off-campus homes, I'd be out of luck. I'd have to sacrifice my senior year of college because of a vocal minority's generalization of UConn students that live off campus. I'm sure, as governmental officials, you are all familiar with the terms "vocal minority" and "silent majority." Analysis done by Wellesley College suggests that "in particular occasions, where stakes are high and public opinion can shift in the space of hours, the largest amount of user-generated data (the study done by the Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation Group that holds no statistical or scientific merit) is authored by a group of dedicated users, the "vocal minority", who go at great lengths to create the impression that they and their opinions are the majority. While this happens, the real majority remains silent and contributes to the conversation sporadically, mostly after an important event has concluded." A perfect example of this is the Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation Group's supposed study of the negative impact that UConn has on the town of Mansfield. This is a direct quote from a Daily Campus article from this past April: "An informal study by the Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation Group found UConn's off-campus student population had the 11th-highest impact of the 55 major public universities evaluated. The group considered the impact of off-campus students on the total populations of the towns or cities where their main campuses are located." Number one, an informal study? So right off the bat, we can conclude that, due to the informal nature of the study, it holds no scientific, nor statistical merit. Secondly, the figures found in the study mention nothing about the nature of the impact so what we have here is people with no association to the study making unsubstantiated inferences based on its results. A direct quote from Ms. Rebecca Shafer of the MNPG regarding whether or not the study took certain variables into account reads: "I think it's slight, because I think every (university's) set of data is probably taking into consideration the same things." I think this because I think that and probably also this. The claims being made here are completely based completely on bias and the attempt by the vocal minority to make the numbers suit their needs. What you, the town council is seeing here, is nothing short of radical lobbyists taking advantage of the fact that the majority of the residents of the town of Mansfield, aren't aware of just how discriminatory these ordinances are. I can guarantee that this silent majority won't stay silent for much longer. Off campus students are slowly becoming familiar with these discriminatory ordinances that are currently in place, and zero of these students feel that the ordinances are fair.

Councilman Shaiken, you said at the last town meeting that these amendments are simply language changes to fix technicalities within the ordinances. Perhaps the council needs to consider amending not just the semantics of the ordinances but also the general body of them. Mr. Shaiken you also said that you wanted to get this out of the way as quickly as possible so as not to inconvenience people in the middle of a lease period. There are two problems I have with this. Number one: any tenant moving into a rental property has already signed a lease. Number two: these ordinances have been inconveniencing tenants of rental properties and their landlords for the entire time that they've been around. Perhaps the council should take their time and propose legitimate solutions to the problems they, you all sitting behind that desk, have knowingly imposed on one particular demographic group within your constituency.

UConn has 13,481 undergraduate and graduate students living off campus. This is 54.9% of Mansfield's population of 24,588, according to the Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation Group. Mayor Shapiro, you said, yourself, at the last town council meeting that you want to hear from everybody. It is impossible to do that when the majority of your constituents, the people that elected you all to these positions aren't present. I'd like to read a portion of the minutes from the Ad Hoc Committee on Rental Regulations meeting on July 25<sup>th</sup>: "M. Ninteau explained that staffing levels have been reduced for the summer months but would be increased and site inspections for overcrowding would be continued in mid-August." So you on the town council know that the people living in rental properties aren't around, yet some of you still believe that getting these amendments passed as quickly as possible is a good thing. All this tells me is that you know that people would oppose these changes and you don't want to give them the opportunity to participate in this discussion even though it directly affects them.

In my opinion, as a government of the people, by the people and for the people, you have an obligation to look at these ordinances from an unbiased perspective. You have an obligation to hear from the people that you represent, the same people that are affected by these ordinances. When the founding fathers wrote the words "all men are created equal" I doubt that they meant "all men are created equal unless they are landlords or tenants of rental properties." I'd like to close with something that Mr. Craig Marcus said at the last town meeting, we aren't looking for special treatment. We just want to be treated equally.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Justin Gorton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Justin Gorton

74 Lynwood Road, Storrs  
August 8, 2016

To the Mansfield Town Council:

My name is Joan Seliger Sidney. My husband, Stuart Jay Sidney, and I live at 74 Lynwood Road. Both the house next door and the one across the street have become student rentals, as well as one up the street and two around the block. As Storrs residents since 1972, we are very concerned about our family neighborhoods becoming UConn fraternity houses and dorms.

Over 400 homes have already become student rentals, with more every week. For example, in Tuesday's *The Chronicle Homes*, Ferrigno Realtors listed twelve houses, 10 in Storrs and 2 in Mansfield as "SOLD." Most sold for low \$200,000 or less, driving down our property values, with ads like "GREAT INVESTMENT PROPERTY NEAR UCONN!....ready for you to start making money!" Another, "One of the few grandfathered 4 bedroom rentals. INVESTORS TAKE NOTICE!"

Many of these landlords are collecting \$3-4,000 per month from each of their student rentals. Since these are obviously businesses, they should be taxed as businesses, Representative Gregg Haddad and I agreed in conversation this past week. With these exorbitant rents, unless they're prepared to immediately purchase a house, incoming faculty, staff, and other newcomers cannot afford to live in Storrs/Mansfield.

Another concern is the increased traffic and speeding as these students hurry to classes or their friends come to drink and party, making our curvy roads more dangerous for wheelchair walkers, older residents, and especially young children. Why can't these students obey our speed limits? Why are they and/or their drunken partyers bashing our mailboxes a few times a year?

Many undergraduates don't have the maturity to safely live off-campus. Isn't that why UConn has so many RAs in the dorms? In my walk around the block this noon, I met a student moving into the second house from the top of Lynwood. He's a UConn sophomore. Why aren't he and his young housemates in a campus dorm?

Have you seen this photo of undergraduates drinking on the roof of a rental on Hunting Lodge Road? If they fell and got hurt, could they sue our Town? (see attached)

We are also tired of the yearly turnover. Students who move in and out each academic year have no interest in getting to know their neighbors. They have never come to our annual block party. We are losing neighborhood stability as well as the possibility of long-time friendships.

Our quality of life is important! These are our homes. Our lifetime savings are in these homes, whose value is depreciating dramatically. Only rental landlords are

eager to buy houses next door to student renters. Look at Hunting Lodge Road, the disastrous loss of a family neighborhood turned into a slum.

We need these new ordinances to improve enforcement and close loopholes to avoid out-of-control house-grabbers and students from destroying our Town.

Thank you for addressing this issue on our behalf, the permanent residents.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Seliger Sidney". The ink is dark and the handwriting is fluid and legible.

Joan Seliger Sidney

August 8, 2016

Jody Bailey  
9 Old School House Road  
Storrs, CT

Old School House Road is a small neighborhood at the corner of South Eagleville Road and Route 32, directly behind the old school house.

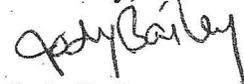
Our house was built in 1995, along with most of the 12 homes on our cul-de-sac. Of these, 6 families are the original owners and occupants, so they have been our neighbors for over 20 years. The children of these families rode their bikes, waited for the bus, and graduated from school together with our children. Their parents are the ones who watch over our house when we go on vacation, and with whom we share garden vegetables. We have enjoyed a very positive culture of community and cooperation.

In 2005 one of the homes was sold, and it has since become a rental property to college students. Then, in 2010, the house directly next door to this property was also sold to an investor, and is now also a property which rents to students. The houses are set back from the road, and share a driveway, which is adjacent to our driveway. There is a constant stream of cars going back and forth, sometimes going very fast, which troubles us, since there are pets and children here. There is constant turnover of tenants, who are not invested in or committed to the neighborhood.

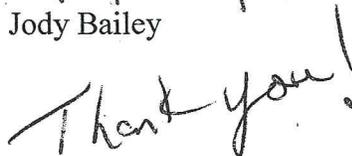
Our concern is the fact that there is currently no limit to the number of rental properties allowed on one street. If the number of rentals homes increases, we are very worried about losing the stable neighborhood which we have enjoyed. Our children have grown and moved on, and we are looking forward to retirement some day. We may retire here, since we have grown to love our home, neighborhood, and the town. Or, we may decide to move to a warmer climate, or closer to family. Having any more rental homes to students will adversely affect either of our choices, since our positive neighborhood culture would be further eroded, if we decide to stay, and the selling price of our property would be directly negatively impacted, if we choose to sell.

We hope that you vote to make amendments to the housing code to prevent more rental homes to students in neighborhoods in Mansfield.

Sincerely,



Jody Bailey



To: Town Council  
From: Rebecca Shafer, Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation  
Date: August 8, 2016  
Re: Change in Ordinances/Student Petition

I took a few minutes to read the comments written in the landlord's petition. It is not about how tenants can be better neighbors and blend in with the neighborhoods, it is more about how "these are the best party years of our lives, that's what we want to do and you shouldn't be spoiling it for us."

Fortunately, the vote tonight is not about whether to provide more hookah pipes, beer funnels and belly-button shots. It is about how we can provide the permanent residents of our town with the peace and quiet to which they are entitled.

The Supreme Court in *Village of Belle Terre v. Borass*, has said that "a quiet place where yards are wide, people few, and motor vehicles restricted are legitimate guidelines in a land use project addressed to family needs. This goal is a permissible one....it is ample to lay out zones where family values, youth values, and the blessings of quiet seclusions and clean air make the area a sanctuary for people."

**PULLMAN  
& COMLEY LLC**  
ATTORNEYS

**Diane W. Whitney**  
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Hartford, CT 06103-3702  
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August 4, 2016

**Via E-Mail**

Matthew W. Hart, Town Manager  
Town of Mansfield  
Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building  
4 South Eagleville Road  
Mansfield, CT. 06268

**Re: Student Rental Housing Issues**

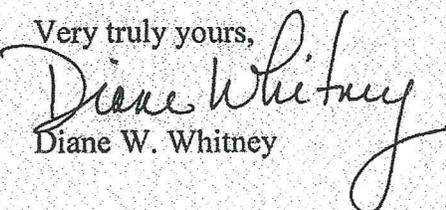
Dear Mr. Hart:

I represent Ryan McDonald and others landlords who own residential property in Mansfield that they rent to University of Connecticut students. I understand that there is concern at this time with some of the conditions put on that property, the ordinances that apply to it, and the way that the restrictions are enforced. Rather than continue to have enforcement issues that tax your municipal resources and frustrate both the landlords and their neighbors, I would welcome the opportunity to work with all interested groups in this matter to see if a more permanent and effective solution could be reached that would satisfy the concerns of all interested parties.

To facilitate that process, would it be possible to postpone the hearing scheduled for August 8<sup>th</sup>, and also postpone any hearings to be held in the next few weeks on enforcement matters so we could try to fashion such a solution? I cannot honestly tell you how long that process might take, but I can pledge that my clients and I are ready to start the process immediately and have no interest in prolonging it. If you would identify those parties you think should be involved in this effort, that would help us get started quickly.

I hope that all parties will be interested in taking advantage of this opportunity and that we can work together to arrive at a solution that will be helpful to all. Please feel free to call me if you have any questions about this request.

Very truly yours,

  
Diane W. Whitney

John E Murphy  
P.O. Box 436  
199 Browns Road  
Mansfield Center, CT 06250  
860-377-7166—jmurphy527@aol.com

August 7, 2016

To: Mayor Shapiro and Members of the Mansfield Town Council  
Members of the Planning and Zoning Commission  
Re: Proposed Changes to Zoning Ordinances + UConn Action Request

I offer strong support for voting in favor of the proposed zoning ordinance changes tonight. I attended the recent hearing and it was clear to me that the majority of comments were in favor of this effort to resolve existing loopholes and differences between the building code and zoning regulations.

To my knowledge most of the speakers in opposition had clear personal financial interest in maintaining the status quo. These properties are *businesses*—and any new fees or requirements that new rules will create are appropriate costs of doing business, and regardless, owners will continue to earn a profit from their activity. It will be a matter of degree. I have no problem with profit at all—but in these cases it must be balanced and responsible.

There is no need—at all—to wait until students return for fall classes. The proposed changes are targeted for property owners and landlords and their behaviors, not tenants. They are not relevant to students and have only ancillary impact on their lives.

This matter has been reviewed all year and it is time to correct and rectify the cause of many problems now. These minor changes are urgently needed to protect our status quo before it disappears and the forces of development continue to steamroll our community.

And in a related matter I ask members of the Town Council to join me and other residents who are taking our case for town preservation directly to the University of Connecticut and its Board of Trustees. The single most powerful and sustainable long-term solution for the space needs of UConn is its own Depot Campus. UConn continues to make only marginal use of this huge parcel of adjacent land—and it always claims that this is due to the high costs of cleanup and remediation of toxics in that environment. It is time to finally bite the bullet and clean it up! I say use it for new student housing and move the Greeks back to campus—and stop forcing students to move off campus.

The university has received billions in public investments and the UConn Foundation is a powerhouse for fundraising. There are resources for such a cleanup and money could be raised if this was made a priority. As a public land grant institution UConn should fully honor and respect the legacy of the Storrs Brothers who gave their land for the school so many years ago. What would they think of what they would see in this area today?

I also understand UConn has ignored the request from Mayor Shapiro to reconsider plans to install an open greenway at South Campus instead of adding badly needed student housing. This is unfortunate. What are the real priorities? Doing nothing with the Depot Campus is like fiddling while Storrs burns—and I can smell the sulfur. So I ask the Town Council to discuss this strategy and consider asking UConn to be part of the only real long-term solution and not continue to be part of the problem. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the name 'John' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Ryan McDonald  
Landlord, 78 Lynwood Road  
P.O. Box 68  
Mansfield, CT 06268  
August 08, 2016

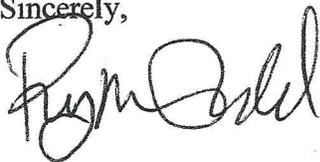
Paul Shapiro  
Mayor  
Town of Mansfield  
Audrey P. Beck Municipal Building  
4 So Eagleville Road  
Mansfield, CT 06268

Dear Paul Shapiro:

Please see attached letter from my past tenants of 78 Lynwood Road. They request for their letter to be entered into the official minutes at the Town Council meeting tonight, Monday, August 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan McDonald". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ryan" and last name "McDonald" clearly distinguishable.

Ryan McDonald  
Landlord, 78 Lynwood Road

CC: Matt Hart, Town Manager; Maria Capriola, Assistant Town Manager; Michael Nintean, Director Building and Housing Inspection; Linda Painter, Director of Planning Development

Dear Town of Mansfield Town Council,

I am a former resident of 78 Lynwood Road and I wanted to chronicle some of the behavior and actions of my neighbors while my housemates and I lived in this residence over the past year. I wish to provide you with some honest experiences so students in the future do not have to go through what we went through in hopes that there may be better relations between students and residents of the Town of Mansfield.

Throughout the year my housemates and I were constantly subjected to neighbors violating our privacy, including people stopping outside and taking pictures of our house and our cars. This harassment, which we suspected was happening, became even more extreme when a picture of our house was posted as the cover photo on the "Mansfield Neighborhood Preservation" Facebook page. We were dubbed the "house of shame" on this Facebook page, having at the time received no contact or complaints from any of the neighbors. The picture was in fact a picture of our house on a weekend afternoon with some friends parked in the driveway, doing no wrong. Weeks later, we received complaints relayed from our landlord that our neighbors were bothered by the amount of cars in our driveway. We were shocked to see the lengths they would go through just to see us get in unwarranted trouble with the Town. The extra cars were often times housemate's girlfriends sleeping over or friends who were unable to drive and decided to stay over – none of which is of any business to anyone in the neighborhood or of the Town of Mansfield Housing Authority.

This harassment continued throughout the school year and over Winter break though we never threw parties and never had the police called on us. Eventually our landlord received Zoning Violation Citations from the Town, when a friend or girlfriend would sleep over, which ends up on our shoulders per our lease. The Town used this as a means of wrongfully punishing our landlord of housing more tenants than is allowed just to appease the constant calls and emails from our neighbors who were bothered by our comings and goings. After receiving the first ticket for \$150, I called the town to notify them that 6 cars were allowed in our parking plan and therefore they couldn't ticket us for something that was legal. The person at the Town office apologized and rescinded the ticket. After this, the neighbors would not back down, and continued making sure we got in trouble. We were issued another \$150 ticket a few weeks later for the same reason as the first. There was no physical evidence, nor documentation of 6 people living in the house but because some neighbors told the town that there was based on the number of the cars parked there, we were wrongfully issued another ticket.

At this point none of our neighbors had yet tried to talk to us about the issue, though we constantly made efforts to reach out and be open to hear concerns in order to solve the problem diplomatically. We felt as if we had our privacy invaded and that we were being told that we couldn't live freely and let our friends or girlfriends stay the night as we so pleased. The imposing and sometimes illegal behavior by our neighbors was disturbing. The fines that our neighbors "succeeded" on placing on landlords are passed onto the tenants and cause further financial burden for the lot of us. I implore the Town of Mansfield be more open about these

issues and not allow non rental property residents to subject students to this type of harassment in the future.

Sincerely,

Samuel Julien and the tenants of 78 Lynwood Road

Good afternoon,

My name is Gregory Nicholson and I am senior at the University of Connecticut. I extend my sincerest apologies for not being able to come and speak to you myself, but I have made previous obligations that do not allow me to attend tonight's meeting.

The issue we have at hand here that affects so many students and is why I wrote this is that 3 unrelated people living in a house is not allowed in Mansfield, however, if more than 3 people are living together that are related it is fine.

For those of you that do not know, to live on campus at the University of Connecticut, room and board, ranges from \$12,436 (at the cheapest) to \$16,994. That breaks down to an average of \$1,036-\$1,412 a month. And we still are not considering tuition and books into that equation either. That, for any college student is ridiculous and is why those with the opportunity to move off campus do in an attempt to save money. However, with a rule in place that only allows 3 unrelated people to live together, even if the house may have 5 bedrooms, does not allow for a majority, if any, college students to save money.

Based on a study conducted in 2012 by CERC (Connecticut Economic Resource Center), the percentage of residents in Mansfield that fall into the age 18-24 groups, which is mainly all college students, is 52%. With such a large majority of students making up the population in this area, we should have a say in what is going on and assist in the making these rules, because there is not student here that would be fine with this. We are being discriminated against, it is against the law, and something needs to be done.

In Title 46a-58 of the CT General Assembly it states that,

“a) It shall be a discriminatory practice in violation of this section for any person to subject, or cause to be subjected, any other person to the deprivation of any rights, privileges or immunities, secured or protected by the Constitution or laws of this state or of the United States, on account of religion, national origin, alienage, color, race, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, blindness or physical disability.”

Further, in Title 46a-64c, it states in subsection 2 that,

(a) It shall be a discriminatory practice in violation of this section:

(2) To discriminate against any person in the terms, conditions, or privileges of sale or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection therewith, because of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, age, lawful source of income or familial status.

Age, ancestry, familial status.....it is written in the law, that this is not allowed.

Just to clarify, If 5 unrelated college students, attempting to save money, try and rent a house off campus in Mansfield and are denied the opportunity, but a family, which most

times have people who are older the 18-24 year old age group, have that opportunity to do so, that is discrimination. The town of Mansfield is discriminating against our age range, the fact that we do not have the same ancestry, and that we do not have the same familial status. To keep these ordinances because the town of Mansfield is stereotyping every single college student as a partier, and believe we will trash a house because we are irresponsible, is not only stereotyping, but also discrimination.

Some of you may think that what I am saying is nonsense and holds no bearing in this situation. However, I had the amazing opportunity this past summer to work at a Connecticut state agency called the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities. This agency focuses specifically on human rights and discrimination cases and is why I know that this is discrimination. I actively dealt with discriminatory cases based on gender, age, origin, sex, ancestry, familial status, and many others. I have done my own research in these areas, and I have learned enough to know that if these laws are not changing, legal action can be taken, and will be taken. To reference another ongoing issue such as this, at Quinnipiac University, the town is offering limited options for renting houses to unrelated college students in the town surrounding Quinnipiac because of the same fears the Town of Mansfield is. What is being found in these cases? Well, they are finding that the town is discriminating against these students and action is being taken. Just look it up online, there are several wonderful articles that outline the discrimination-taking place.

Residents of Mansfield, I ask that these ordinances be changed to prevent discrimination from further occurring in our town. We are in the 21<sup>st</sup> century where equality should be practiced in every aspect in the United States. I thank you for the time you have spent listening to this speech and I am again, extend my apologies for not being able to be in attendance today.