

Naperville Area Homeowners Confederation

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July 11, 2016

Subject: NAHC Board of Directors Position on Naperville Housing Advisory Commission Recommendation to Amend City Fair Housing Ordinance to include, with restrictions, Federal Housing Vouchers as a Legal Source of Income

Background: In January, 2016, following discussion at both its November 2015 and January 2016 meetings, the City of Naperville Housing Advisory Commission voted without dissent to recommend that the Naperville City Council amend the City Fair Housing Ordinance to include a definition of legal source of income. Following additional testimony at its June 2016 meeting, the Commission, by a show of hands and again without dissent, affirmed this earlier recommendation.

Action: In anticipation of City Council addressing this matter at its July 19, 2016, meeting, the voting members of the Naperville Area Homeowners Confederation Board of Directors unanimously approved the following motion made by President Bob Fischer (who is also a member of the Housing Advisory Commission) and seconded by Director Rick Strawbridge:

The Board of Directors of the Naperville Area Homeowners Confederation supports the unanimous recommendation of the Housing Advisory Commission to expand the definition of "legal source of income" within the current Naperville Fair Housing ordinance to specifically include Federal Housing Vouchers. We encourage the Naperville City Council to amend the current city Fair Housing ordinances as recommended.

As an organization whose credo is "Neighbors Helping Neighbors," we see the failure to consider renting to voucher holders out of hand, simply because they are receiving Federal Housing Assistance, as a morally if not also legally repugnant form of discrimination against the most vulnerable members of our society, including veterans, the aged, disabled, and poor, whose goal is an improved quality of life for themselves and their family. Making illegal the failure to even consider renting to a voucher holder a part of our community's existing commitment to Fair Housing is the right course of action to eliminate the potential for the impermissible discrimination that our City's original Fair Housing Ordinance was designed to prohibit.

It is our belief that the caveats included in the proposed ordinance, including the ability to rent the property to another bona fide applicant at any time during the negotiation, inspection or approval processes, as well as the recognition that landlords can terminate the rental agreement process should the health and safety inspection process uncover defects which the landlord, due to economic reasons, declines to correct, are sufficient to address many often heard arguments against renting to voucher holders.

Further, and from a purely business perspective, we believe there is a sound economic incentive to landlords to deal with prospective tenants who are prescreened and checked for criminal backgrounds; who offer a guaranteed payment of the majority or more of the rent, on a regular date, irrespective of other factors such as foreclosure actions due to lease violations; and who open up the potential for property tax relief for owners that accept vouchers.

Approved by the Board, July 7, 2016.



Robert A. Fischer
President, Naperville Area Homeowners Confederation

