

September 18, 2007

Dear City Council,

We strongly support the nuisance ordinance.

We have lived behind the apartments on Russet Street in Meadowood for 17 years, with minimal problems until summer 2006. With a change in landlord and arrival of new tenants we have encountered a variety of problems. Last summer some apartment residents:

- Started partying regularly at 3:00 pm. These parties routinely lasted until 3:00 am, with loud music and lots of swearing.
- Engaged in loud fights, that have involved knifing and hospitalization.
- Shouted profanities easily heard inside our house more than 100 feet away.
- Regularly played loud music that can be heard inside our house.
- Played loud car stereos that can be heard anywhere in our house with windows and doors closed. We know when several people get home because of this noise – day and night.
- Threw empty liquor bottles and other trash in our back yard and around the apartment property.

These conditions not only affect our safety and quality of life, but also the lives of the many apartment residents who want to follow normative civil behavior. We know of at least one case in which a family of long residence in the apartment behind our house was retaliated against by other apartment residents who thought they had called the police.

This retaliation included:

- Destroying personal property.
- Trying to smoke them out with their barbeques.
- Blocking passage out of the driveway.
- Blocking the entrances to their apartment.

After many years of residence, this family felt so unsafe that they moved out.

We are told by the landlords, who do not have resident managers, that we need to report problems to the police. If they get enough police reports then they can issue an eviction notice or non-renewal of lease. We are willing to do so, but it was our police call that resulted in the intimidation of the family mentioned above. We are worried because we need to put our names on the police reports to get evictions or non-renewals notices. We no longer want to use our backyards during these parties, fights and regular loud music. People have moved out of our neighborhood because of the noise and increased crime.


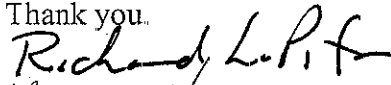
We understand that the landlords who own properties behind our house struggle with unruly tenants, but have failed to effectively take actions such as tenant screening and property management that would prevent the problems in the first place. Responsibility for proper behavior lies both with residents and with property owners. We should not have to be in the position of filing police reports in order to get action. Rather, landlords

have the responsibility to effectively screen tenants, maintain properties and become active players in solving problems before they happen

The city needs a variety of tools with which to assist neighborhoods in the management of safe and family friendly conditions. Most landlords understand that their self-interest lies in proper screening of tenants and proper attention to the maintenance of their properties and the actions of their tenants. They care about the health, welfare and viability of the neighborhoods in which they own property. Unfortunately, not all landlords understand their responsibilities to the community or care about neighborhoods. The nuisance ordinance will have no impact on most landlords. It will, however, present ineffective or negligent landlords with an incentive to screen tenants and manage properties effectively.

We ask that you pass the nuisance ordinance so that we can reclaim our home and our neighborhood, and residents in the apartments have a decent place to live.

Thank you.



Richard L. Pifer

Matjorie Hannon Pifer

5713 Bartlett Lane