



Subject: Request for Consideration on Waltham Citizens Input Meeting

Dear Waltham City Councillors,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. I am writing to bring to your attention how the Citizens Input Meeting was conducted. This important matter required the reading of the Waltham Housing Rights Notification Ordinance and the request that citizens testify on what the law proposes. As a concerned resident, voter, and representative of many members of WATCH CDC community in the city of Waltham, I believe it is vital to express our collective views and contribute to the decision-making process that shapes our community.

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude for the dedicated service you provide as elected representatives of our city. Your commitment to serving the best interests of Waltham and its residents is commendable and essential to the growth and prosperity of our community.

I would like to draw your attention to the following issue regarding how the Citizen's Input Meeting was held last June 21, 2023.

The Citizen's Input Meeting was considered a "special meeting," in which Section 2-5 of the city charter states that in a special meeting, "no other business shall be in order." Many of the speakers at this meeting deviated from the proposed topic of discussion, The Housing Rights Notification Ordinance. It seemed as though many of the speakers did not have the correct information on what the ordinance proposed or stated. Due to this, many of the speakers discussed issues that have no connection to the ordinance.

Furthermore, no information was given on what the ordinance proposed. The document on the website stated the purpose of the meeting and somewhat defined the ordinance's goals. Although in person at this meeting, the aim was not stated. The document also provided definitions for specific terms relevant to the ordinance, which were also not presented.

Moreover, when participants of this meeting asked questions about this ordinance, they were denied answers. I know that you all are very informed about this ordinance and its proposal, so I wondered why the citizens were barred from asking questions about it. I would also like to note that the meeting participants were disruptive to the speakers, laughing, talking, and clapping several times. This was also an extremely disruptive factor. Another disruptive factor was that a

group of landlords were at the doors, stopping people from entering or even hearing the meeting. I recognized an officer there, but it seemed they did not do anything about this.

Lastly, I would like to emphasize the importance of providing accurate information on the Waltham Housing Rights Notification Ordinance. Transparency and accountability in governance is key and having a meeting without reading the ordinance was not. As our elected representatives, it is crucial that you keep residents informed about the progress made on the ordinance and provide updates on any decisions or actions taken and remain open to feedback and suggestions from the community.

In conclusion, I appreciate your time and attention to this matter. I trust that you will approach this issue with the dedication and professionalism that you have consistently demonstrated in the past. By actively engaging with the community and working together, we can find the best solutions for the challenges facing Waltham's residents. I am confident that through collaboration and open dialogue, we can build a stronger and more inclusive city that we can all be proud to call home.

Thank you for your service to the city of Waltham.

Sincerely,

Genoveva Tavera
WATCH CDC
Community Organizer