

**Borough of Edinboro
Public Hearing Minutes
Ordinance 613
January 7, 2019**

ROLL CALL: Present were Aaron Gast, Jim Kiley, Alyssa Dobson, Pat Davis, Fred Langill, Nathan Latimer, and Mary Ann Horne.

Other officials present were Solicitor Tim Wachter, Borough Manager Kevin Opple, and Finance Director Jason Spangenberg. Citizens present were Maryann Mook, Renee Thayer-Allison, M.L. Smith, Jackie Rhen, John Ponsoll, Casey Ponsoll, Alex Topor, Victor Kwiatkowski, Stephanie Berger, Mary Schenck, Scott Rastetter, and Curtis Hals.

OPENING:

Mayor Gast called the hearing regarding ordinance 613 to order at 6:00 PM.

DISCUSSION:

Alyssa Dobson discussed the proposed changes to student rentals as part of this ordinance. She said that feedback was received after the previous ordinance hearing, which led to the removal of the proposed change to the definition of a bedroom, due to concerns regarding the potential impact on parking. Also, the proposed new language for automatic revocation of the rental license under certain conditions was removed. The main changes to student rentals caused by the ordinance were mentioned. Restrictions on student status would be loosened to allow for life changes, such as having children or going back to school, without having to move out of current housing. A three-year grace period would be instituted to allow student rentals to be rented to non-students without losing their student license. Council would reassess this at the end of the three years with the option to extend it. Other smaller changes were mentioned; the full ordinance is printed in the January 7, 2019 regular meeting minutes with all changes indicated.

COMMENTS & QUESTIONS:

Renee Thayer-Allison read aloud an email that she had sent to Council listing her concerns. She had a concern with the requirement that tenants remain students for the full term of their lease, which is out of control of the landlord, and she noted that it should be the responsibility of the tenant to comply with all local laws. She had questions about grandfathering and the number of students in a unit which requires it to be a student unit. She expressed a concern about the room for interpretation of the ordinance language from the Borough Zoning Officer. Another concern was what would happen in the scenario where a tenant dropped out of school without telling the landlord, and she suggested adding more language to the Borough's tenant information sheet to shift the burden of compliance to the tenants. Ms. Dobson and Solicitor Wachter addressed some of her questions.

Fred Langill stated his desire to keep the rules simple, adding that both sides have responsibilities. He requested that the landlords choose liaisons to meet with the ordinance committee on a regular basis to discuss the impact that this ordinance is having.

Casey Ponsoll asked what exactly is required as a form of validation that tenants are in fact students. Ms. Dobson replied that anything that shows their student status would work, such as a student ID or even a signed affidavit. Solicitor Wachter clarified that this requirement would not be in effect until the next permit cycle.

Jim Kiley asked what the procedure would be at the end of the three-year window. Solicitor Wachter said that Council would decide before the end of the three years if the window would be ended or extended, and the Manager would send a letter to all landlords informing them of the decision. Mayor Gast stated that the goal is to make the rules more flexible without removing the ordinance completely. Mr. Langill said that he has full confidence in Manager Oppe to establish a good relationship between the zoning office and the landlords.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mary Ann Horne moved for adjournment, and the hearing was adjourned at 6:30 PM.

ATTEST:



Manager Kevin Oppe



Mayor Aaron Gast