



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
JONATHAN F. MITCHELL, MAYOR

January 4, 2018

City Council President Linda M. Morad &
Honorable Members of the New Bedford City Council
133 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

Re: Proposed Neighborhood Quality Ordinance Changes

Dear Council President Morad and Honorable Members of the City Council:

I am submitting for your consideration three proposed ordinance changes that are designed to improve our city's neighborhoods.

The first ordinance change would lower the number of valid police complaints necessary for a property to be designated a problem property from eight to four. As you know, once a property is designated as a problem property, future police response costs can be assessed to the property owner. By decreasing the number of triggering complaints from eight to four, we will be able to target problem properties more quickly and spur property owners to take more prompt action against tenants who are causing problems for the neighborhood.

The second ordinance change would add a section to the City Code that would require the owners of non-owner occupied buildings (except single family houses) to post the contact information of the property owner and manager or agent in a conspicuous place in the building's main public area. The goal of this ordinance is to ensure that tenants and City personnel can contact the owners and managers or agents of a property when problems arise. Our code enforcement inspectors have found that the inability of tenants and inspectors to contact landlords directly is a persistent challenge in many neighborhoods.

The third ordinance change would amend the existing "clean and lien" ordinance, Section 12-41, so that property owners have only five days, as opposed to fourteen, to dispose of litter that is a source of filth or that is dangerous to the public health, safety, or welfare. This ordinance change will reduce the time that city residents have to live among littered properties.

I look forward to working with you to pass these ordinance changes and to continue to improve New Bedford's neighborhoods.

Sincerely,


Jon Mitchell
JFM/crc



CITY OF NEW BEDFORD

In the Year Two Thousand and Eighteen

AN ORDINANCE

Amending Chapter 6, Buildings and Other Structures

31- 509

Be it ordained by the City Council of the City of New Bedford as follows:—

SECTION 1. Chapter 6, Article VII., Section 6-125 **Chronic problem properties**, is hereby amended by striking the word “eight (8)” from subsection (a) *Definitions*, paragraph (1), so the paragraph reads as follows:

- (1) The term “problem property” is a residential or commercial property for which there have been no fewer than four (4) valid complaints in the preceding twelve (12) months for any misdemeanor or felony under Massachusetts law that occurred in a dwelling unit within the property, on the property, or on an immediate sidewalk or street or abutting property, involving tenants, occupants, residents, or persons allowed on the property, including offenses involving the disturbance of the peace. In designating a property as a problem property, the City shall take into consideration the nature of the activity, the number of dwelling units on the property, the nature of the use of the property, and the history of police complaints at the subject property and at properties owned by the same property owner or managed by the same management company.

Section 2.

This ordinance shall take effect in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 43 of the General Laws.