

Staff Report

RENTAL HOUSING CODE

May 29, 2009

BACKGROUND:

Attached for your review is the proposed revised Rental Housing Code, Chapter 13 of the Ames Municipal Code. In an effort to assist in the review of this lengthy and complex document, this staff report attempts to summarize the major policy issues resulting from two years of periodic Council meetings and directives, nine months of Rental Housing Advisory Committee (RHAC) meetings, and five months of public outreach and input.

It is important to note that many of the procedural requirements reflected in the proposed code were developed by the Inspections Staff based upon our current Rental Housing and the International Property Maintenance Codes as well as input regarding some aspects from our RHAC. The substantive requirements contained in Divisions IV through VIII of this proposal were arrived at through negotiations and compromises by the diverse membership of the RHAC. Concessions were given and gained by RHAC members representing tenants, neighbors, and rental property owners. Therefore, the RHAC recommendations represent a balanced approach supported by the committee members.

DIVISION 1- ADMINISTRATION – Sections 13.100 to 13.108

This division outlines the powers and duties of the Building Official or designee (13.102-13.103) and identifies the four possible penalties that could result from a violation of this Code (13.104). These penalties include: a municipal infraction citation, declaration of a public nuisance, a stop work order, or a revocation of a Letter of Compliance.

A provision has been added to 13.104 that allows the City to enter a property to correct a limited number of exterior violations, if the property is declared a public nuisance and the property owner, after appropriate notice, fails to take corrective action to eliminate the violation. This is the same procedure that was recently adopted by the City Council for dangerous buildings. Since the review of administrative rules and procedures were not part of the RHAC charge, this new enforcement tool was not discussed specifically with the members. However, the staff had indicated to the Council at the time that the Dangerous Building Ordinance was approved that this type of enforcement tool would be preferred as part of any subsequent adoption of a property maintenance code.

A significant new feature of this Code is the creation of a Property Maintenance Board of Appeals (13.108). This new appeals board will be comprised of seven members that will include: 1 property owner with less than 50 rental dwelling units, 1 property owner with 50 rental dwelling units or more, 2 homeowners who do not own any rental units, 1 long-term tenant (non-student renter for more than 5 years), 1 student tenant (full-time post-secondary student), and 1 general contractor who owns no more than 6 rental properties.

Any person impacted by a decision of the Building Official can make an appeal to this appeals board based on a claim that: the intent of the Code has been incorrectly interpreted, the

provisions of the Code do not apply, there are other means to satisfy the intent of the Code, strict compliance to the Code is impractical, or it is impossible to comply with the time limit established by the Building Official to complete the corrective action.

DIVISION IV – RETROACTIVE CONVERSION PERMITS, BOARD VARIANCES, ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS, PRE-EXISTING CONDITIONS – Sections 13.401 to 13.405

In the early 1980's the City was struggling to enforce its newly adopted rental housing codes. At the request of affected rental property owners, changes were made to the original code language. Concessions were made that authorized an ad-hoc board to issue retro-conversion permits to non-code compliant rental units. The purpose of the retro-conversion permits was to address the issue of "grandfathering" units that were built during periods of no code enforcement or differing codes than existed in the early 1980's. This multi-year effort unfortunately was not well documented and has caused considerable stress for rental owners and staff.

The proposed rental code will allow for holders of Retroactive Conversion Permits, Board Variances, and Administrative Approvals to continue non-compliant conditions by reapplying to the Building Official for permanent exceptions to current code requirements as long as the procedures called for in 13.402 are followed and the Building Official verifies that the non-compliant condition has been maintained in a safe and otherwise code-compliant manner. This process will allow the staff to document the pre-existing conditions and record the property so that future conflict can be minimized.

In accordance with the recommendations of the RHAC, the following additional non-compliant conditions will be allowed to continue as long as they are maintained in a safe and otherwise code-compliant condition (13.402 (4)): Off-street parking, building numbering, stairway rise and run, handrails, guardrails, minimum ceiling height, natural light and ventilation, minimum room area, minimum site requirements, single furnace serving multiple units, and egress windows above grade.

The deliberations among the staff and RHAC members lead to an agreement reflected in 13.403 would not allow the continue existence of the following four conditions; inadequate second exit from basement apartments (allowed until 12/31/10 to correct), lack of separation between gas-fire appliances and bedrooms and or bathrooms, lack of fire alarm system for rental properties with more than 16 dwelling/sleeping units (must be installed by 7/1/14), and lack of hard surfaced driveway approach (allowed to correct within 3 years of notification by Building Official).

DIVISION IV THROUGH VIII – PROPERTY MAINTENANCE, LIGHT, VENTILATION, OCCUPANCY, PLUMBING, MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, AND FIRE STANDARDS –Sections 13.406 to 13.802

Over time the City staff had received concerns regarding the enforcement of our rental housing code from tenants, neighbors, and property owners. These concerns were organized into a list of twenty-five items. The deliberations of the RHAC and staff yielded the following recommendations for the twenty-five items that have been included in the proposed code.

1. Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets in kitchens and bathrooms. *Required in bathrooms?*

Current rental code 13.39(6) requires in bathrooms; proposed code section 13.409 requires also in kitchens, as has been required in the electrical code for more than 20 years

Consensus: safety issue; additional cost provides additional safety benefit

2. Handrails on all stairs with more than 3 risers. *Required for more than 3 or more than 4?*

Current rental code 13.26 makes reference to other past and current codes. Clear standard needed; proposed code section 13.409 requires handrails on all stairways with 4 or more risers.

Consensus: safety issue; a clearly stated standard is preferable to references to other codes

3. Visible Street address numbers/apartment unit numbers. *Specified height? Numbers written in script o.k.?*

Current rental code 13.35(4) requires “clearly visible number or letter”. Clear standard needed; should be consistent with City Council approved addressing policy; proposed code section 13.407(2) requires numbers not less than 4 inches tall, in sharp contrast.

Consensus: safety issue; a clear standard of size and contrast is needed.

Concession to landlords: proposed code accepts continued use of noncompliant numbers and script, provided they’re “legible and visible from the street”; such numbers and script to be brought into compliance with the new standard when replaced.

4. Gutters and downspouts. *Are they required? Must be maintained?*

Current rental code 13.25, only says roof drainage shall “avoid discharge on steps, where possible”. Clear standard needed.

Consensus: A safety issue (ice accumulation) and a structural issue (surface water draining toward foundation). The proposed code section 13.407(7) acknowledges other approvable methods of directing roof drainage away from walkways and structures. However, if gutters and downspouts are present, they must be maintained.

5. Required off-street parking - number of parking spaces - hard surfacing. *Paving gravel parking areas required?*

Current rental code - not addressed. A standard is needed for maintenance and expansion of parking areas.

Consensus: not a safety issue; landlords shouldn’t be required to hard surface existing off-street parking areas; new spaces created should conform to hard-surface (concrete or asphalt) standards of the Zoning Ordinance, or an alternate as approved by the City Engineer; existing dirt and gravel parking areas must be maintained so there is no ponding and water will drain away from the parking area.

Concession to landlords: proposed code section 13.406(4-8) assumes all existing off-street dirt and gravel parking areas were in compliance at the they were time created; further, that if they are continuously maintained with a 5 inch layer of crushed rock,

gravel, or the equivalent approved material, there is no requirement to pave such pre-existing parking areas with concrete or asphalt.

NOTE: The City's legal staff has advised that this section will be more legally enforceable in court with the addition of "and fixed boundaries" to enhance clarity in legal proceedings. These words have therefore been added to the RHAC's wording.

6. Minimum area requirements in dwelling units - sleeping rooms, habitable rooms. *What are the minimums?*

Current rental code, room area: 13.36(1); 13.39(2)(b); ceiling height 13.39(2)(a). The first section gives minimum room areas, the second and third sections reduces for properties with Retroactive Conversion Permits (Retro Permits).

Consensus: Rarely a safety issue, but should have clearly stated standards, and a method for continued approval of those previously approved by Retro Permits. Clear standards and method for continued approval are included in the proposed code section 13.402(4)(e)(g).

7. Furnace and chimney safety certification - *Why is this required?*

Current rental code 13.37(1)(e) - "safe heating facilities" required.

Consensus: A safety issue. Inspectors routinely find unmaintained furnaces found to be hazardous due to causes ranging from cracked heat exchangers to damaged and disconnected vents, to beer bottles and refuse entirely obstructing chimneys and flues. Furnace servicing, vent and chimney certifications should be required, based upon inspector observation. Clear standards are needed and included in the proposed code section 13.702(7).

8. Lights in closets - *Why is a bare bulb a problem?*

Current rental code 13.29 - "The electrical system shall be...reasonably safe to occupants..." This requirement for protecting bare incandescent bulbs in closets is currently found in City Electrical Code.

Consensus: A safety issue. Contents of high closet shelves in proximity to bare bulbs have been the cause of many fires nationwide, and at least one fire in Ames in the past 18 months that resulted in a total loss of one older rental dwelling. Clear standards consistent with the electrical code are included in the proposed code section 13.704(7).

9. Accessory structures - maintenance of garages, sheds, fences, walls - *Why standards for these?*

Current rental code 13.22(1) - generic standard: "All areas of the building shall be structurally sound."

Consensus: A safety issue. All buildings should be safe for use and maintained so they don't deteriorate into an unsafe condition. Clear standards are included in the proposed code section 13.406(10).

10. Roofs - *If it doesn't leak, why would I do any maintenance?*

Current rental code 13.22(1) - generic standard only: "Each dwelling shall be reasonably weather tight." Consensus: A basic maintenance issue essential for all rental dwellings. Damage can occur to structure and interior before leaking begins to occur. Clearer standards are needed and included in the proposed code.

Concession to landlords: Proposed code section 13.407(7) contains no statement that loose or falling shingles are a violation requiring correction. The roof must “admit rain” or result in “dampness or deterioration in the walls or interior portion of the structure” to be considered code deficiencies.

11. Grading and landscaping - provide positive drainage - dry basements - *Why?*

Current rental code 13.38(1)(d) - only states “stagnant water is not allowed to accumulate or stand anywhere on the premises”

Consensus: A health and safety issue. Surface and groundwater drainage toward a structure eventually results in foundation damage and failure. Clear standards are needed and included in the proposed code section 13.406(2).

12. Structural members - interior/exterior - *What does this mean?*

Current rental code 13.22(1) - generic standard: “All areas of the building shall be structurally sound.”

Consensus: A safety issue. Clearer standards are included in the proposed code section 13.407(1,4-6,10-12).

13. Painting - exterior - *Why should I paint? And how bad does it have to be before I have to?*

Current rental code 13.22(1) - requirement may only be inferred from vague general standard “Each dwelling shall be reasonably weather tight.”

Consensus: A basic maintenance item. Paint protects from siding damage, and water infiltration into wall cavity and interior. Although clearer standards are included in the proposed code section 13.407(3), this remains a judgment call by the Building Official that can be appealed to the Property Maintenance Board.

14. Windows - *What does this mean?*

Current rental code 13.23 - “Glass doors and windows shall be unbroken.”

Consensus: A safety issue. Clearer standards on maintenance of all parts of windows and doors are included in the proposed code section 13.407(13).

15. Screens on operable windows - *Are screens a must?*

Current rental code 13.23 - screens must be maintained in good repair. Also 13.38(1)(i) landlord to supply screens; 13.38(2) owner can delegate duty to change screens and storms to tenant.

Consensus: A health and sanitation issue - provides fresh air and minimizes spread of insects and resultant insect-borne bacteria and disease. Clearer standards are included in the proposed code section 13.407(14).

16. Egress windows - *Where are these required? Do I have to enlarge existing bedroom windows?*

Current rental code 13.35(1) and (2) - requires emergency windows in basement and above the second floor only.

Consensus: A safety issue. High incidence of fires in sleeping rooms makes this a high safety priority. Clear standards are needed and included in the proposed code.

Concession to landlords: International Codes require egress windows from first floor sleeping rooms. The proposed new rental code does not require compliant egress windows from first floor sleeping rooms. Further, the proposed code section 13.801(3) allows landlords to replace compliant and noncompliant egress windows with economical window replacements that reduce the size of window openings.

17. Stairways, decks, porches and balconies - *What level of maintenance is required?*

Current rental code 13.22 - "All areas of the building shall be structurally sound."
13.26(1) - general handrails and guardrails in new rentals, only. And 13.26(2) - vague handrail standard.

Consensus: A safety issue. Failures of these items frequently results in personal injury and less frequently, death. The proposed code section 13.406(10) includes more specific standards.

18. Knob and tube wiring - exposed - *Do I have to replace this old wiring?*

Current rental code 13.29 - generic only "...maintained so as to be reasonably safe."

Consensus: A safety issue that deserves attention when found damaged due to exposure, deterioration, tampering, or other reasons making it unsafe and likely to spark and ignite a fire. The proposed code section 13.703(2 and 4) includes expanded general text about safe electrical maintenance, and refers to the electrical code for specific standards.

19. Carports and garages - *Can required egress windows open into a garage or carport?*

Current rental code 13.35(1) - "...one [of two required exits] may be a window...that open[s] directly to the outside."

Consensus: A safety issue. Basement egress windows opening into carports and garages is in violation of the current code. Clear standards are reiterated in the proposed code section 13.801(2 and 3) and reference to the 2006 International Residential Code is also included.

Concession to landlords: A generous compliance deadline for existing noncompliant basement egress windows is December 31, 2010.

20. Guardrails - *Can I just replace the old ones with the same thing?*

Current rental code 13.26 - general handrails and guardrails in new rentals, only. Nothing on maintaining existing guardrails.

Consensus: A safety issue. Guardrail height and lower barriers minimize falls. The proposed code section 13.409 includes specific thresholds that trigger compliance with current building code standards.

21. Smoke detectors in each bedroom - *Why is this now required?*

Current rental code 13.33(1) - "owner shall provide [on] each level of each dwelling unit..." (not required in each sleeping room).

Consensus: A highly effective and economical life preserving feature. Detectors in sleeping rooms have long been required by other adopted standards. The proposed code section 13.802(2) includes this requirement.

Concession to landlords: A generous compliance deadline for installing detectors in sleeping rooms - December 31, 2010.

22. Interior door hardware - *Why is this a code issue?*

Current rental code - no standard.

Consensus: A safety issue. Protection of door openings onto exit corridors provides additional seconds or minutes to occupants in event of fire. Smoke and fire may be slowed from spreading into hallways or from hallways into sleeping rooms by doors and functional latching hardware. Such brief protection has made the difference between life and death in many fires nationwide, and at least one in Ames in recent years. The proposed code section 13.408(3) contains a clearly stated requirement.

23. Stair rise and run - *Can I keep these old stairs the way they are?*

Current rental code doesn't address except in generic 13.22 - "All areas of the building shall be structurally sound."

Consensus: A safety issue. Falls on stairs are a frequent cause of personal injuries. Uniform heights and depths of stair risers and treads are a leading cause. Specific standards and allowable variances are in the proposed code section 13.408(2), as is the threshold for requiring stairway compliance with the current building code.

24. Furnace replacement - shared furnaces in multi-family dwellings - *Why is this a problem?*

Current rental code - no standard

Consensus: A health and safety issue addressed in other adopted standards and applied consistently to new structures. No known incidences of disease or fire spread in existing buildings in Ames. The issue is clarified in the proposed code section 13.702(6) to differentiate between rules for existing buildings and rules for new buildings .

Concession to landlords: The proposed rental code specifically permits the continued use of single furnaces serving multiple dwelling units and re-circulating ventilation air, provided other additional monitoring and maintenance measures are implemented. This concession means that landlords will not be required to install a new furnace in each dwelling unit when the original furnace serving all dwelling units fails - as is currently required by the mechanical and rental codes. This primarily affects scores of older single family homes that were converted to multi-family apartments many years ago.

25. Fire alarm system - retroactive installation

Current rental code - no standard

Consensus: A fire code requirement that can have a dramatic impact on occupant safety in larger apartments (16 or more units) by assuring advance warning to all tenants. A retroactive requirement of the International Fire Code which deserves and receives special mention in the proposed code section 13.802(5).

Concession to landlords: The proposed rental code provides a generous timeline for installation of the required alarm systems of 5 years from the date of adoption of the code. Possible time extensions are available based upon the same model as Council previously approved in the retroactive sprinkler ordinance.

TEN OBJECTIVES DEVELOPED BY RHAC

In addition to the specific code recommendation, RHAC members identified ten objectives that were ultimately dealt with in the following manner:

1. Establish clearer maintenance standards in the code
This general goal was the Committee's theme throughout the effort and is accomplished in the proposed code.
2. Establish codes/standards that are the same for rental and owner-occupied properties
This goal is part of a future project scheduled to start in September.
3. Clarify meaning and application of grandfathering
The City Attorney provided his counsel to City Staff on this topic before we began meeting with the Committee. Key points of his memo to the Building Official:

"Persons with property rights that are affected by a change in the law -- most commonly by a zoning change -- are permitted to continue their structural or use non-conformities in a "grandfather" status. Sometimes it is done explicitly in the legislation. Other times it's done by court doctrine.

In general, however, the concept of "grandfather" status does not apply to housing standards and rental housing letters of compliance. The purpose of the rental housing code, Chapter 13, is to insure that rental housing is "safe, sanitary, and suitable." By enforcing the code now when it may not have been in the past does not take away any vested property right of the owner/landlord. Enforcing the code keeps the renters safe. The concept of "grandfathered" status simply does not apply.

There are a couple unrelated, but similar concepts present in the rental housing code that may seem like exceptions to what I just stated:

- 1) *Over-occupancy was tolerated by the terms of the ordinance -- section 13.36(2) -- through 2006. Even that specific exception has now expired.*
- 2) *Retroactive conversion permits filed before June 30, 1986, or as allowed by the Housing Appeal Board after that date. See section 13.39(3). The standards are rigorous and I can't imagine that the Housing Appeal Board would issue many, if any, after this passage of time.*

One more unrelated concept which is still referred to by some as "grandfathering" -- is the concept that because something has been excepted, accepted, or overlooked for so many years it would be unfair or unjust to insist of compliance now. For every exception we make based on "case by case" analysis and decision-making, the City opens itself up to charges of inconsistency and favoritism.

I am an advocate for inventorying these problems, making a conscious decision about how and when to enforce, and then systematically educating the violators and giving them an opportunity to voluntarily come into compliance."

The Committee's recommendations are consistent with the City Attorney's recommendation. The proposed code sections involving "grandfathered" items call for fresh evaluation of the condition; updating Inspection Division records describing the

nature and extent of the condition; and then either approving its continued existence, or providing the owner a reasonable time to voluntarily bring it into compliance.

4. Establish clearer descriptions of tenant vs. landlord responsibilities

The Committee devoted more than one section in the proposed code to defining respective property maintenance, cleaning, and upkeep duties of tenants and landlords. The proposed code also directs readers' attention to the State of Iowa Uniform Residential Landlord and Tenant Law for additional details of the tenant-landlord relationship.

5. Set reasonable time limits for compliance

The Committee developed a specific section in the proposed code establishing a hierarchy of time limits based upon degree of hazard, seasonal weather conditions, and magnitude of project. The Committee also developed a general distinction of "noted" versus "cited" code violations.

6. Working together on tenant issues

The proposed code addresses this through clarification of tenant and landlord property maintenance responsibilities.

7. Garbage issues

The proposed code includes definitions of tenant refuse and garbage disposal duties, outdoor storage prohibitions, and tenant duty to move garbage containers to and from street for contracted garbage pickup.

8. Front yard and off-street parking

This topic is addressed in a specific section of the proposed code.

9. Partner with service organizations to help needy owners

This topic was discussed by the Committee and could be further developed by a future committee in development of a possible owner-occupied property maintenance code.

10. Enforce/revise the junk vehicle ordinance

This chapter of the Ames Municipal Code is scheduled for revision later this year.

BENEFIT ANALYSIS

In reviewing the proposed Rental Housing Code, the staff has identified the following benefits of this proposal:

Benefits to rental owners:

1. Continued acceptance of several non-compliant features approved under Retroactive Conversion Permits, Board or Administrative Variances, following public safety evaluation by Building Official.
2. Code procedure added to enable approval of certain items that cannot be made code compliant.
3. Alternative equivalent methods of code compliance may officially be considered.

4. Specific appeals board and procedures established for landlord concerns specific to rental housing maintenance and management.
5. Time limits generally specified in the text for maintenance and repair deadlines
6. Noted versus cited code violations: Two separate categories created - noted items may not prevent the issuance of a Letter of Compliance (LOC), cited items must be repaired prior to issuance of LOC.
7. General owner and tenant responsibilities for building and yard housekeeping duties stated clearly.
8. Visible address numbers: The standard is generally consistent with the Council approved house numbering policy enacted several years ago. The compromise does not mandate immediate change but instead, as address numbers are replaced or additional ones needed they will meet the new code.
9. Filing fee of \$75 for appeal to the Housing Board of Appeals is waived for one appeal per rental structure, per inspection cycle.
10. Gravel off-street parking areas: Continuation of these will be approved, except that driveway approaches (between street and sidewalk) must be paved within 3 years. Any new parking spaces added must be paved, per current standards in Zoning Ordinance.
11. Single furnace serving multiple units - continued use indefinitely, provided routine maintenance is done.
12. Currently adopted International Codes require egress windows from all sleeping rooms. The proposed new rental code does not require compliant egress windows from any above-grade sleeping rooms for existing housing. Further, the proposed code allows landlords to replace compliant and noncompliant egress windows with economical window replacements that reduce the size of window openings.
13. Basement egress windows – non-compliant basement egress windows can continue in existence until December 31, 2010 giving rental owners time to comply.
14. Ground fault protection in all baths and kitchens deferred to July 1, 2010.
15. Smoke detectors in sleeping rooms deferred to December 31, 2010
16. Fire extinguishers may be provided in either each unit, or one on each floor
17. Annual fire extinguisher maintenance certification deferred to July 1, 2015
18. Knox boxes required in apartments with six or more units deferred to July 1, 2011
19. Fire alarm retrofitting for existing 16+ apartments deferrable to July 1, 2014 or beyond (with time extensions)
20. Exterior property cleanliness duties of tenants and landlords clearly stated.
21. Weeds, volunteer and uncultivated vegetation must be managed. Clear standards added.
22. Existing noncompliant exterior stairs can continue in use indefinitely, if safely maintained. Clear standards of acceptability.

23. Existing noncompliant interior stairs can continue in use indefinitely, if safely maintained. Clear standards of acceptability.
24. Existing noncompliant interior and exterior handrails, guardrails can continue in use indefinitely, if safely maintained. Clear standards.
25. Garbage removal responsibility of tenant clearly stated.
26. Insect and rodent extermination duties of tenants clearly stated.
27. Ceiling heights of less than 7 feet can continue in use indefinitely, if maintained. Clearer acceptance standards.
28. Electrical maintenance work that may be performed by landlord or maintenance staff is clearly defined.
29. Plumbing maintenance work that may be performed by landlord or maintenance staff is clearly defined.
30. Mechanical maintenance work that may be performed by landlord or maintenance staff is clearly defined.
31. Lighting required in public and common areas by landlord clearly defined.

Benefits for renters, guests and neighbors:

1. Acceptance of several noncompliant features approved under Retroactive Conversion Permits, Board or Administrative Variances, subjected to public safety evaluation by Building Official. Elimination of those conditions determined to be hazardous.
2. Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) outlets are required in bathrooms. The new code adds this safety feature to kitchens.
3. House numbers will over time become more visible for guests and emergency responders.
4. Gutters and downspouts must be maintained when present to provide protection for the entrances and exits, and safety to pedestrians is emphasized. Water drainage will require runoff away from the structure and not allow for runoff into basement and that will deteriorate the property or adjacent properties.
5. Retro-conversion permits will be evaluated and documented. Basement apartments will be required to have safe exiting.
6. Inspectors authorized to require that furnaces receive professional safety evaluation when appropriate.
7. Screens for required openable windows must be provided, although the landlord can make the tenant responsible for installation as part of the lease agreement.
8. Exterior property cleanliness duties of tenants and landlords clearly stated.
9. Yard must be graded and planted to prevent soil erosion onto neighboring properties or sidewalks and streets.
10. Sidewalks, walkways must be safely maintained.

11. Weeds, volunteer and uncultivated vegetation must be managed. Clear standards added.
12. Vandalized property must be repaired, restored.
13. Detached garages, sheds, outbuildings must be maintained.
14. Painting of exterior siding, trim, windows, doors, is required when the material is designed and intended to be protected by paint.
15. Foundation walls must be free from cracks and openings that allow rodent and insect infestation.
16. Exterior walls must be maintained free from holes, breaks, openings that let in wind and water.
17. Stairways, decks, porches, balconies must be safely maintained.
18. Windows must be maintained free from holes and breaks that let in wind and water.
19. Exterior doors must have hardware and locks that work.
20. Basement hatchways must be maintained to prevent wind, water, rodents.
21. Apartment doors must have hardware and locks that work and provide safe egress in emergency.
22. Windows less than 6 feet above grade must have working locks.
23. Dwelling interiors must be painted when needed.
24. Doors to sleeping rooms must have door hardware that latches when closed.
25. Insect and rodent extermination duties of landlords clearly stated.
26. Toilet rooms and bathrooms can no longer serve as the only hallway to another room or space.
27. Bathroom doors with locking devices are required for shared baths.
28. Toilet and bathroom floors must have a hard, nonabsorbent surface that can be effectively cleaned.
29. Plumbing fixtures must have adequate clearances to allow cleaning.
30. All gas furnaces and water heaters must be safely and effectively vented to the outside, unless manufactured as unvented.
31. Single furnaces serving multiple units must be disclosed to tenants in lease. Furnaces more than 5 years old must receive annual safety inspection and certification. When replaced, must receive safety upgrades.
32. Electrical system must be safely maintained. Clearer minimum standards.
33. Closet light protection is clearly required.
34. Smoke detection in all sleeping rooms required.
35. Knox boxes will be available to firefighters in 6+ apartments.
36. Fire alarm systems will be installed in existing 16+ apartments.

TIMING AND SCHEDULING ISSUES

Recommendations from the RHAC include the need for staff to conduct training sessions regarding any newly adopted rental housing code. At the completion of the RHAC meetings it was anticipated that Council action would occur sometime in late 2008. Since the community-wide discussion of property maintenance codes for all residential properties pre-empted action on the proposed rental housing code, timelines determined to be adequate by the RHAC have been adjusted in the proposed ordinance. Two deadlines still remain. The first, the moratorium on 4 rental code items has expired on May 13, 2009. The second is the request from rental property owners that the training not occur during late July through August. Since in Ames most rental contracts renew on 1 August this period is very busy for rental owners and managers. A proposed schedule is as follows.

June 2, 2009	Special Council meeting and discussion of proposed code.
June 9, 2009	Public Input and first reading of new rental housing code
June 23, 2009	Second and third readings of new rental housing code
July 1, 2009	Ordinance effective date.
July 6-17, 2009	Training sessions for Rental Property Owners and managers.