

SUGGESTIONS FOR CPC AND COMMUNITY ACTION

Google seems to show that 'sober' houses are highly protected at State and even Federal levels. Townships in CA have tried to stop them in court and have failed, - however California is notoriously liberal so we need to determine if NJ law is similar. Even in the worst case we should never give up, but it would influence our strategy and means we may have to play the longer game. Simply put, I and the overwhelming majority of residents won't accept a 'well regulated' sober house, we want it gone. Period. So, if I might suggest some possible CPC strategies....

1. The CPC needs to become visibly pro-active in this matter and keep the CPC membership fully up to date by regular e-mails and Facebook.
Otherwise, the rancor which surfaced at the Emergency meeting will be likely to persist and we all lose.
This whole issue needs to be an immediate action item on the CPC agenda, visible and in time for the next meeting on 18th, anything later will likely be perceived as foot dragging (justly or not).
I would expect a significant attendance on the 18th, (including myself), a presentation of strong actions to date and planned would be wise.
2. The CPC needs to revise its rules immediately with changes that affect everyone equally but impact the bottom line for a sober house, i.e., Impact the pocketbook for owner and renter LLC's. These changes would also need review by a good specialist lawyer.
For example:
 - 2.1. Commercial businesses are already prohibited in CPC bylaws from being conducted in the development, this IS a commercial business.
We should investigate if this by-law is enforceable in NJ (Seen this in Google, worth a try)
If not feasible then a huge **increase in CPC dues for homes run as commercial businesses.**
 - 2.2. Add rules which penalize anti-social behavior increase in and make the (CPC registered) homeowner pay heavily for infractions by residents.
Fines tripled if police called.
 - 2.3. Tighten rules regarding upkeep and appearance of property, owner must keep grass trimmed, (that would require a landscaper).
No deck chairs, hammocks, junk, bottles, cans, or trash visible from the road. This is common practice and good for the development.
 - 2.4. Acceptance of Bylaws is a precondition of residence here, can that be tightened to include a no-challenge clause?
3. The township may well be powerless against State rules but we're better with them on our side.
So:
 - 3.1. Calls to them from CPC and individuals are good but should be sympathetic if they're as stuck as we are.
 - 3.2. I'm told a recent study has shown the arrival of sober housing can cause a reduction of up to 15% in nearby property value.
We need to emphasis to the township that a slide in our property values will impact the most lucrative part of their tax revenue.
4. For a longer-term effort, we in the development need to organize letter writing to our State representative(s),

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- 4.1. To say their well-intended laws are driving neighborhoods into decline and they urgently need to revise them.
 - 4.2. Individual letters should be well written, focused, and cite specific grievances. (Likewise, any group signed letter)
 - 4.3. They should appear to be understanding but with valid concerns (and absolutely avoid any appearance of NIMBY).
5. We should aim a similar campaign at our Federal level representatives (Andy Kim et-al)
6. We need to research what tactics have worked for other HOAs, and see if there is any cooperative effort amongst other HOAs.
I believe this is the case, we are not the first, we need to reach out to them.
7. Most of all, we need legal assistance/advice, not from a general law practice but an aggressive specialist, .
Unfortunately, this will cost us, maybe a special levy.

Basically, I'm saying IF we can't stop the initial arrival then we need a defense in depth, and the CPC absolutely needs to be proactive, not reactive. An adoption at the meeting on the 18th of steps towards such as the above would alleviate the impression, as was evident at the Emergency Meeting, that nothing is being done.