

Residents Proposal for Fraternity and Sorority Regulations

April 29, 2011

Dear Councillor Vaughan:

We have received a copy of the letter to you dated April 4, 2011 from a group of unnamed “Fraternity and Sorority Property Owners” with its proposed framework of commitments.

It is utterly laughable that the very people who are ***breaking the law*** on a regular basis think they should dictate what steps should be taken to rein in their behavior. This is not about “finding solutions that everyone is comfortable with” as they suggest. It is about the residents of these houses obeying the law.

For a more realistic framework of commitments, we would suggest the following:

The Trustees of the Fraternities and Sororities commit to:

1. Ensuring, by whatever means necessary, that the residents of these houses are aware of and understand the by-laws regarding noise and garbage, so that they cannot plead ignorance.
2. Ensuring, by whatever means necessary, that the residents of the Fraternity and Sorority houses obey the existing city by-laws regarding noise and garbage.
3. Providing up to date addresses and contact information of actual owners to the City, MLS and Police.

The Neighbors, Residents Associations and Condo Boards commit to:

1. Notifying the Police and/or MLS whenever the by-laws are broken, so there is an official record of each offence, and demanding that action be taken.

The City of Toronto, MLS and Toronto Police Service commit to:

1. Enforcing the existing by-laws regarding noise and garbage.
2. Licensing Fraternity and Sorority houses as rooming houses.
3. Creating a dedicated Annex neighbourhood police hot-line.
4. Providing 24/7 police foot-patrols.
5. Introducing steeper fines for by-law violations, with escalating fines and criminal charges for consistent repeat offenders.
6. Installing CCTV cameras in the area to deter by-law violations.

Furthermore, we propose a Code of Conduct for the fraternities and sororities that would include the following:

- a) Parties will take place inside the house, not in the yard or on the porch/veranda/balcony etc. where they disturb the neighbors.
- b) Music and other noise (including boisterous talking, shouting, singing, swearing, etc) that can be heard by the neighbors will not be permitted at any time.
- c) Loudspeakers and/or television sets will not, at any time, be placed outdoors or in the windows of the houses so that music and/or television programs are projected outwards.

- d) Residents and visitors will not congregate noisily outdoors. This includes drinking beer in rowdy groups outdoors during the daytime and evening so that the neighbors cannot enjoy the quiet use of their balconies and/or homes.
- e) Residents and visitors will come and go from the houses quietly, without yelling, shouting, screaming, shrieking, etc. To that end Frats will employ a “security guard/bouncer” for parties.
- f) Frat houses will not be used as after-hours clubs which result in excessive street noise and traffic due to late night revellers arriving and departing.
- g) Garbage bins will be placed at the curb for pickup on the correct day and time and returned to storage “no later than 10:00 pm on the day of collection”, and not left at the curbside for days (By-law 844-15 A-2).
- h) Properties will be kept clean and will not be littered with household trash and/or remnants of parties (beer cups, cardboard beer crates, etc).
- i) Frat houses will employ the services of a professional caretaker to ensure yards are maintained and kept free of litter, garbage, etc. as they have been unable to consistently manage this task on their own.
- j) Frat members will refrain from urinating and/or vomiting on their neighbours’ property.
- k) Frat members will not set off fireworks in their yards, on the street, in their neighbours yards etc. at any time without a permit from the City.
- l) Frat members will refrain from stealing public property (such as park benches).

A suggested web site set up by frat houses is not helpful in this regard, as neighbors are not going to waste their time visiting a web site to make a noise complaint. They are going to call the Police.

The number of times per month that MLS and/or the Toronto Police Service have taken “formal action” - whatever that means - is similarly irrelevant. There is nothing in the by-law that states that frat houses are permitted to have *any* noisy and disruptive parties. The frats’ suggestion that they be allowed 3 noisy parties per month equates to 3 weekends out of every 4! Multiply that by the seven Frats within shouting distance of our building and we’re at 21 days per month. This is ludicrous! **We are a residential community, not the entertainment district.**

The owners and residents of these properties need to be reminded of the relevant portions of the by-law regarding noise which clearly state the following:

*“No person shall make, cause or permit noise or vibration, **at any time**, which is likely to disturb the quiet, peace, rest, enjoyment, comfort or convenience of the inhabitants of the city.” By-law 591-2*

*“No person shall emit or cause or permit the emission of sound resulting from the operation of any electronic device or a group of connected electronic devices incorporating one or more loudspeakers or other electro mechanical transducers, and intended for the production, reproduction or amplification of sound, **that projects noise beyond the lot line of the property from which the noise emanates and into any street or public place.**” By-law 591-2.1 A-1*

*“Where a source of sound is subject to more than one provision of this article, **the most restrictive provision shall apply.**” By-law 591-8*

The time for endless talk and consultation is over.

We look forward to being notified when the above measures have been implemented.

Sincerely,

Affected Neighbors