

October 17, 2013

Update: We Have A Stop Stealth Dorms Champion

We have a Stop Stealth Dorms champion! We applaud Councilmember Mike Martinez for affirming in a recent meeting with members of our coalition that he will ask the Council to pass a resolution to lower occupancy limits (from 6 to at least 4) in single-family neighborhoods. Doing so will substantially reduce the financial incentives of stealth dorm developers to demolish affordable homes to build dorm-style housing. We believe the resolution will employ a process similar to the one used to pass the recent rental registration ordinance: the Council would ask the City Manager and staff to provide the Council with a proposed ordinance in 90 days, after a public review and input process.

Councilman Martinez understands the destructive affect this type of housing has on all single-family neighborhoods, not just neighborhoods in Central and North Central Austin. He will carefully weigh whether this should be an ordinance that applies only to Central and North Central Austin or whether it will allow other neighborhoods to opt in as they are currently able to do with parking and other policies.

Over the last few months, members of the **Stop** Stealth Dorms Coalition have met with City Manager Mark Ott, Deputy City Manager Michael McDonald, Director of Code Compliance Carl Smart, Director of Planning and Development Review Greg Guernsey, and members of the City Council. The Code Compliance Department has compiled substantial research on the topic of occupancy limits in other cities, and its staff is playing a productive role.

We expect to have more good news in our next update. We are becoming increasingly confident that we can achieve our goal of reducing occupancy limits. We continue to make progress with City Officials to address the nuisance problems generated by existing stealth dorms. Meanwhile, we are in need of more volunteers to help build our coalition and communications network. We enjoy hearing from everyone.

Email us at StopStealthDormsatx@gmail.com Visit STOPSTEALTHDORMS.Com website and sign the petition.