Minutes not yet approved.
Approval and any edits to be made in succeeding minutes.

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TOWN OF BLOOMFIELD

FAIR RENT COMMISSION

There was a meeting for the above referenced commission held on Thursday, August 6, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in a hybrid meeting style. The in-person meeting location was Bloomfield Town Hall – Wintonbury Room/Conference Room 5, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT, and the virtual location was via Zoom.

Commissioners present were: *In-Person*—Joy Chance, Chair; Sarah Adanti; Robert Ike; and *via Zoom*—Mark Saunders

Commissioners absent were: Alan Budkofsky, Vice Chair; Barbara Thornton; Monica Townsend

Also present were:

- **Tenants**: McQuillar; Hill
- **Witnesses**: Alleyne
- **Landlord/Property Management/Legal Counsel:**
  - For Arba Equities: *via Zoom*—From Up Realty: JB Oquendo & Lexi Watts (joined at 6:08 p.m.); Attorney Paul Small, GLG Law
  - For Navarino Property: *via Zoom*—From Navarino Property: Tracy Forbes & John Weigel
- **Town Staff/Contractors**: *In-Person*— Lauren Gambardella, Town Attorney; Lynn Weisel, Recording Secretary; *via Zoom*—Aimee Krauss, Director of Health

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

It was moved by Commissioner Ike, seconded by Commissioner Saunders, and voted unanimously to approve the 7/2/26 meeting minutes as written.

Swearing in of all Parties Testifying

Ms. Weisel swore in all parties going to testify.

Hearings on Fair Rent Commission Complaints

Wright v. Arba Equities LLC

Commissioner Chance noted that the Wright case was postponed to allow time for the landlord to make fixes in the apartment and for the Health District to do a reinspection.

McQuillar v. Arba Equities LLC

Ms. McQuillar provided a brief update on her case. She noted that her unit was measured for new kitchen cabinets as they believe that is where the drain flies are coming from. She reported difficulty in

receiving communication. She was given the option to move to a new unit, but reported that she saw roaches in the unit and did not want to move there. Ms. McQuillar provided information on the ways the property manager has tried to fix the issue, and noted that her family was moved to a hotel to allow additional work to be done.

Mr. Oquendo detailed the work that had been done to-date in the unit to try to eliminate the drain fly problem.

As Ms. Watts arrived after the swearing-in, she was sworn-in by Ms. Weisel.

There was a discussion about the rent and the rental increase from $2600/month to $2650/month. There was a disagreement on whether the rent had increased. Ms. Watts stated that if there was an increase that it could be rectified by giving her a credit for the month that Ms. McQuillar signed, and then keeping her at $2600/month for the remainder of the time.

There was a discussion about Section 8. Attorney Gambardella noted that the Fair Rent Commission can rule on the rent value as a whole.

There was a discussion about relocation. Mr. Oquendo stated that property management was willing to renovate the new unit to whatever standard was needed. He reported that he, and other people working on the drain fly problem, felt that that relocation would be best due to the extensive investigation needed in the unit to find and eliminate the issue. Ms. McQuillar shared her desire not to move.

Ms. McQuillar stated that she would agree to $2600/month rental charge.

Commissioner Chance moved that in the case of McQuillar v. Arba Equities that Ms. McQuillar's rent remain at $2600 for the next year. Commissioner Ike seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Attorney Small stated that the last thing that he wanted to do was to file a court order for Ms. McQuillar to physically be removed from the apartment, and that he hoped that Ms. McQuillar would decide to move to another unit. He noted that he didn't want his client to have to spend more for legal costs and fees, and that around $50,000 had already been spent trying to fix the problem.

Attorney Gambardella stated that the Fair Rent Commission did not have jurisdiction to tell a tenant to move into a different apartment.

Attorney Small noted that all parties had agreed with the Commission's order, and stated that they want to resolve the problem for the tenant.

There was a discussion as to if the case was closed, and it was noted that it was. There was a question about future complaints, and it was noted that Ms. McQuillar had the right, as all tenants do, to file another Fair Rent Commission complaint in the future.

Hill v. Navarino Property

Ms. Hill provided an overview of her complaint. She testified that the proposed rental increase was for $100/month. She shared her concerns about a lack of property maintenance, including for snow removal and lawn care, and noted she recently had to go to the ER after a bee sting due to the long grass. She reported that the concerns she was sharing were the same as when she came before the Fair Rent Commission previously, and stated that she felt like she was being asked to pay more while receiving less.

Commissioner Chance summarized the property maintenance concerns, noting they were referred to the Zoning Enforcement Office, who referred them to the Health District. She also noted that Ms. Hill's concern about items in the hallways had been referred to the Fire Marshall.

Ms. Hill detailed concern with not being able to get in touch with property management, and reported that property management staff does not answer the office door. Mr. Weigel stated that the records only show one call from Ms. Hill this year, and noted that they do their best to be in the office and answer the door as often as they can.

Mr. Alleyne, a fellow resident at Navarino Property, was sworn-in by Ms. Weisel. He testified that he was one of the vice presidents of the tenant's union, and stated that the tenant's union received calls from residents about lack of snow removal and reports of difficulty in communication with property management. He also noted outdoor property maintenance concerns with gutters and vines covering windows.

Ms. Forbes reported that they are dealing with a problem with dumping, and working to fix it. She noted that contractors are not always perfect, but that they will be held accountable for their work. She reported that they now have a maintenance supervisor who lives on the property. She highlighted that there are office hours, and that Mr. Weigel is always available by phone. She noted that all calls are recorded.

Mr. Weigel stated that the rent is below their current market rent, and below the current average for the area. He noted that they take this into consideration when making lease offers.

Ms. Hill reiterated why she did not agree with the proposed rental increase.

Commissioner Chance moved that in the case of Hill v. Navarino Property Management, not to allow the proposed $100/month rental increase; and rather that the current rent of $1675 remain intact for the next year based on the following factors taken into consideration by the Commissioners: number 6 (the repairs need to make the apartment livable); number 8 (whether the apartment complies with the town housing code and state statutes relating to health and safety); and number 11 (damages other than ordinary wear and tear, which have caused the apartment damage).

Commissioner Adanti seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Questions, Comments & Feedback

There were no items at this time.

Adjournment

It was moved by Commissioner Saunders, seconded by Commissioner Adanti, and voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 p.m.