

Borough Of Ambler

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Memorandum

To: Ambler Borough Council

From: Glenn Kucher, Code Enforcement Officer

Date: April 30, 2021

Re: Resale Residential Use and Occupancy Inspection Proposed Procedures and Policies

Ambler Borough presently does not require a use and occupancy for the sale of a residential property in the Borough. The Borough presently requires a letter outlining items are in good working condition from the seller. With the present booming real estate market in the Borough, it may be a good time to inspect and regulate some commonly neglected items that have a negative effect on the Borough as a whole. Staff would like to propose starting a residential resale use and occupancy inspection program. This would NOT entail an interior inspection of the property. I feel that many new homeowners in the Borough are either hiring their own home inspector and / or renovating after settlement. New rentals are inspected by the Borough in order to make sure that property maintenance issues are repaired. With performing the below items current staff along with the Building Inspector would be able to handle the increase in tasks. This proposed program would entail inspections of the following:

- Electrical Certification – this electrical inspection and certification would be done by a certified electrical underwriter to ensure compliance and safety under the electrical code. There are several electrical underwriters in the area and a list would be provided to the seller as part of the resale packet information. Electric certifications would be sent to the Borough via email from the electrical underwriter.
- Curb / Sidewalk / Alley Inspection – if a home has a curb, sidewalk and/or a driveway or portion of the rear alley that need repair or replacement it would be required to do so prior to the issuance of a use and occupancy. Borough inspectors would mark the required areas for repair with white spray paint. Walkability is one of the many cornerstones which makes Ambler a desirable place to live, and this would help improve its walkability and safety as properties turnover.

- Sewer lateral Inspection - the seller of the property would be required to hire a master plumber to conduct a video inspection of the sanitary sewer service lateral and issue a certified report regarding the condition. This certified report would clearly indicate whether the private sewer service lateral serving the property is in satisfactory or defective condition. The certification shall clearly indicate that there is no inflow and/or infiltration into the private sewer service lateral, nor any illegal connections, sump pump connections, and that the cleanout vent is capped and not damaged. If the private sewer service lateral serving the property is in defective condition, the certified report shall identify the deficiencies and make necessary changes. I have spoken to plumbers in the Borough that have the necessary equipment and certifications to perform these inspections.
- Backflow preventer verification – this is a check valve located on the house side of the meter to prevent water from flowing in the opposite direction out of the home in the event of an emergency.
- Exterior property maintenance inspection – a visual inspection to ensure that there are no tripping hazards on walkways, loose railings, missing roof shingles or visually distressed items on the exterior.

I have overseen use and occupancy resale inspection programs at my previous municipality I worked at and believe the above lite inspection program could easily be incorporated into the Code Department operations. The next step moving forward would be to draft an ordinance outlining the above. I have several sample municipal ordinance language to assist in this process with the Borough Solicitor. The Borough would be looking for a fee of about \$150.00 which would cover the cost of the initial inspection and a re-inspection and paperwork. The Borough Code Department would be able to implement this program immediately after adoption of the Ordinance. I have obtained all the necessary forms and paperwork get started.

Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments. Thank you for your input and assistance with this matter.