

24 Prescott Street
Apartment 22
Cambridge, Mass. 02138
November 12, 1988

Michael Rosenberg
Assistant City Manager
for Community Development
City of Cambridge
57 Inman Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02139

Dear Mr. Rosenberg:

I have learned from Robert Edbrooke, who attended the reception organized by Harvard University and Homeowners Rehab, Inc. to publicize their roles in the sale of 18-20 Ware Street, that in your formal remarks on that occasion you stated that 18-20 Ware Street is a "deteriorated rent-controlled building".

I find that statement troubling. In representing many of the tenants at 18-20 Ware Street in two recent rent adjustments before the Rent Control Board, I had the opportunity to review materials indicating that substantial capital work had been done at the property. In fact, in 1979, after the building had been emptied out of all tenants, about \$250,000 worth of work was performed. I think it also worth noting that at the Harvard/HRI reception a one-page statement was distributed by those holding the reception. It described the building as being in "very good condition".

If you have information that led you to conclude that the building is deteriorated, I request that you make it public to me or the tenants at 18-20 Ware Street. Since the sale of the building was proposed, the tenants have sought in vain to obtain documentation either from Harvard or Homeowners Rehab about the condition of the building. While HRI has made verbal assurances to the tenants that the building is in good shape, HRI refused to show the tenants the architect's survey of the building they conducted in December 1987 and January 1988. Concern about the actual condition of the property has been one of the major sources of anxiety for the tenants, since they want to know if substantial work is going to be done to the building. Your comment at the reception can only fuel further fears on the part of the tenants.

By the same token, if you had no basis for making that statement, I respectfully request that you publicly retract your state-

ment. As a public official who is presumed to be knowledgeable about the condition of housing in the city you must be held to a high standard. It would be plainly irresponsible for you to make up a false description of the condition of 18-20 Ware Street. I fear that you may deem it necessary to call the building "deteriorated" in order to justify the city's contribution of \$90,000 to HRI to enable them to acquire the property.

I look forward to your early response.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Michael Turk", written over a horizontal line.

Michael Turk

cc: Cambridge City Council
Cambridge City Manager
Tenants at 18-20 Ware Street

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RECEIVED
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1988 NOV 14 PM 4:40
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2.

S-717

Comm. from Michael Turk, transmitting a copy of his letter to the Asst. City Manager for Community Development Re: 18-20 Ware St. & requesting that any information leading to the conclusion that said building has deteriorated, be made public.

In City Council,

November 21, 1988

11-21-88

City Mgr. requested
to Ask for a response
from Michael Rosenberg,
Asst. City Mgr. for Community
Development.

copy sent to the City Manager
11/23/88 mh