



City of Cambridge

20.

IN CITY COUNCIL

February 9, 1998

COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU
 COUNCILLOR RUSSELL
 COUNCILLOR BORN
 COUNCILLOR DAVIS
 MAYOR DUEHAY
 VICE MAYOR GALLUCCIO
 COUNCILLOR REEVES
 COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
 COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the appropriate departments to ascertain whether housing code violations exist at 125 Hampshire Street, and to what extent city employees have or have not responded appropriately to the conditions and events as described in the attached letter from Andrea R. Canaan.

In City Council February 9, 1998.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Margaret Drury".

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury,
City Clerk

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ANDREA R. CANAAN, MSW, LICSW
125 Hampshire Street #2.
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
617-492-8515 (Home)
617-354-2275 (Work)

February 2, 1998

Mr. Gorka
Lorain Funding Limited Inc.
11 Lewis Street #1.
Somerville, MA. 02143

Your agent delivered to my home a Notice of Termination dated January 29, 1998.

My home is very important to me. What I want is to have safe, affordable, reasonably accommodating housing free from harassment and discrimination. With the repairs and accommodations described below, my home will be the best that I can currently find and afford.

I am a very hard working person caring for my mother. Because my mother is disabled, elderly, ill, and has medical and other home health care providers caring for her, it is extremely important that the following happen:

That we receive prior notice for any need for entry into our home. This is for my mother's privacy, comfort and health. This is also important because her service providers must have the access and accommodations needed to care for her.

That you, your workers or agents do not show up at the door, demanding entry without prior notice. My mother can not always physically answer the door or let you hear her response to you from inside the apartment. This is also for my mother's protection from criminals or predators who would invade the apartment claiming to be the landlord or his/her agent(s).

These are all things I have consistently told you since you acquired this building.

I am a cooperative and reasonable person. I want to cooperate with you fully. I am also the care giver to an elderly, ill and disabled parent. I must provide for my mother's safety and health. I have consistently requested reasonable accommodations for my mother and myself. I have asked clearly for the following:

Please call and give written notice regarding your any and all requests to enter my apartment.

Please do not show up, have your agent(s) or workers show up at the door of my home without prior notice to me and my consent.

At no time are you or your agent(s) to enter my apartment without my knowledge and express permission.

In the case of an emergency you will first contact me by phone, and or leave a note under the door informing me immediately that you entered my home and why.

In the case of an emergency you will enter my home clearly inquiring if there are occupants in my home and clearly stating who you are; what the emergency is; and respectfully taking care of any problem your entry and presence has caused.

In addition, I am requesting that you take care of the following health, safety and reasonable accommodations in my home and building in order to provide safe, healthy and reasonably accessible and accommodation housing issues:

There is no back door knob in my home. Please repair and or replace.

There is no working back door lock in my home. Please replace and or repair.

There is no second emergency entrance/ exit in my home because back door can not be opened from inside the kitchen because there is no door knob.

There is no working thermostat in my home. Please repair or replace.

The only heat source is stove burner and oven in my home.

There is a hole in bathroom leading to stairwell. There are building materials hanging from bathroom wall.

There is a broken safety bar in shower. Please replace.

Snow and ice is not cleared from front side walk and stairs. I have been the one doing this job in order to get my mother to and from the appointments safely and to allow health care worker access to our building.

Trash and building materials, including bathtubs, have obstructed my ability to put out garbage. This condition happened twice. Each occurrence happened for four to five days. The last occurrence was cleared Friday morning, January 30, 1998. We currently are putting our garbage on the sidewalk instead of in trash/garbage

containers.

Trash and building materials are obstructing the ability of my mother to safely come down stairway using rail and walker and getting into her wheel chair. This occurrence was from Monday January 26, 1998 through Friday (AM) January 30, 1998.

There is constant dust and insulating materials in halls and apartments. On 2/2/98, the dust was so bad in the building that the building's fire alarm was triggered. I witnessed a workman disarm the alarm. This alarm directly in front of the entrance into my home. Please remedy this situation as soon as possible.

Both washing machines are broken. These machines were a major reason I chose this apartment. Home health care workers and I use these facilities constantly to care for my mother.

On Friday January 31, 1998 my mother called me and informed of the following:

Your agent, contractor personnel of Rozzi Plumbing and Heating of Watertown, MA. Lic. # 7483, telephone # 926-4035, had been knocking on the door. She could not respond to the door. No one had called her requesting entrance to her home.

Your agent entered our home with a key. He did not inquire if there were occupants or announce what his presence was for.

When she asked him to leave he was rude, saying it was an emergency.

Your agent proceeded through the house.

My mother then noticed gas escaping.

There was no heat in the house because the stove is the only source of heat and this had been shut off without prior notice. This prevented my mother's home health care worker from assisting her in health care activities. This increased my mother's discomfort and struggle with an upper respiratory infection.

My mother called my office around noon and left a voice mail message informing me of the entry into our home at approximately Noon, 1/31/98. She told me of the smell of gas in the house and the inability of her home health care worker to care for her. She told me how frightened she was. She told me the man who entered the house was rude and made her feel, "...invisible, like I

was not a person."

I received the message at 2 P.M. and returned to my home at approximately 2:15 P.M. to find a strong odor of gas in the house and no heat.

I called for emergency health and safety services.

I was told to evacuate my mother by emergency response personnel. I hurriedly dressed my mother and took her out into the cold.

The Fire Department responded and made sure all was safe again.

A police officer on the scene, Officer Schuman #45, was very rude and not helpful. I was informed by officer Schuman that a sergeant was coming to talk to me. The sergeant never arrived.

Because I had to return to work and I was afraid another intrusion would occur when my mother was home alone, I asked a friend to come and be with my mother until I returned from work.

When I called to check in at home at approximately 6 P.M. on 1/31/98, my friend informed me that you, Mr. Gorka, was at my home, having not called prior to coming. I spoke with you while you were in my home. I asked you not to come to my home without calling or before communicating with me in writing AND having a clear communication of consent from me to meet with you.

On Saturday morning, February 1, 1998, you came to my home without calling. Again, I asked you not to come to my home without calling first. I did not meet with you.

On Saturday afternoon I found we had no hot water.

I have left several messages with you. You have not responded.

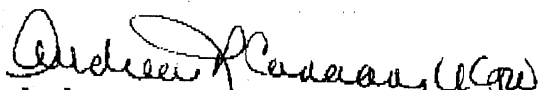
I consider your actions, Mr Gorka, the current conditions existing in my home, and the actions of you and Lorain Funding Limited Inc., as threatening the health, safety and well being of my home and my family and all of my neighbors at 125 Hampshire Street in Cambridge. I consider your actions as depriving my mother of home health and medical care and reasonable accommodation and accessibility to her home. I consider your actions as discriminatory to the elderly, the disabled, the medically needy, Your actions leave me worried that you, Mr. Gorka, and Lorain Funding Limited Inc., may have discriminatory policies against single women, single mothers with children and women of color.

I also understand that two of my neighbors have been without heat since mid-December and all have been served with notices to terminate.

What I want is a peaceful, safe, healthy, reasonably affordable accessible and accommodating home. I will work with you, my neighbors and other resources toward that goal. I would much rather that that work be cooperative rather than adversarial.

Please call to make a mutually acceptable time for you to meet with me and or my neighbors and me so that we can build a mutually respectful and cooperative working relationship.

Sincerely,


Andrea R. Canaan, MSW, LICSW

P.S.

2/1/98 we had no hot water.
2/2/98 at 10 A.M we had no hot water.
2/2/98 at Noon we had no hot water.
2/2/98 at 2 P.M. we had no hot water.
2/2/98 at 4 P.M. I was informed by a worker at the building that the pilot was re-lighted on the hot water heater. When I entered my home we still did not have hot water.
2/3/98 at 10 PM we had hot water.
3/5/98 at 5:25 AM we had no hot water.

cc: Paul Schlaver
Ralph Dunphy
Michael Muche
Eileen Ginnerty
Robert Bersani
Robert Duhay
Lt. Williams
Frank Pasquarello
Sonia DeWitt
Jose Soares
Scott Harshbarger
George Weber
Steve Meecham
Dr. Noe
Mt Auburn Home Heath Care Services
Elder Services
All Tenants at 125 Hampshire Street, Cambridge, MA.

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councilor Tripp Willou

Resolution Regarding Housing Violations at 125 Hampshire Street

Resolved, that the City Manager be and is hereby requested to confer with the appropriate departments to ascertain whether housing code violations exist at 125 Hampshire Street, and to what extent City Employees have or have not responded appropriately to the conditions and events as described in the attached letter from Andrea R. Canaan.

[Margaret, I'll drop the letter off, it's about 5 pages]

attachment

#20

already in

4/3

Councillor Russell

That the City manager be and hereby
is requested to have to direct the
proper ~~department~~ ^{department} to investigate the
situation at 125 Hampshire Street,
as described in the attach
correspondence

(She is bringing it in the morning)



City of Cambridge

20.

IN CITY COUNCIL

February 9, 1998

COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU
COUNCILLOR RUSSELL

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the appropriate departments to ascertain whether housing code violations exist at 125 Hampshire Street, and to what extent city employees have or have not responded appropriately to the conditions and events as described in the attached letter from Andrea R. Canaan.

M. Duehay Consent Order #20
DAVIS Reeves Sullivan CM-65
Boen v. Montluccio Toomey Councilor Russell
Councillors Triantafillou re: Conditions at
the premises numbered 125 Hampshire Street.

In City Council February 9, 1998

Order adopted

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