



CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT

BUREAU OF POLICE

Investigations Division Commander

ADDITIONAL FACTS

According to real estate data, the rental market is the narrowest it has been in more than 10 years. Homeownership rates are down, and demand for rental housing is up, as is the number of landlords as they seek to CASH in on the rental boom. Given the current state of the housing market, many are not able to or are nervous about purchasing a home. This translates to higher demand for rental housing and apartments, which means that average rent rates are also increasing.

According to a June 2012 article in the USA today the current foreclosure crisis will force 3 million former homeowners to rent between 2010 and 2015. The same article reports that in the next 5 to 10 years, we will see billions, if not hundreds of billions, of dollars of private equity pouring into the rental business.

A May 2012, article in the Los Angeles Times reports that high foreclosure rates and a strong rental market has pushed the home ownership rate in the U.S. to a 15 year low. The same article reports that the rental market with its strong demand and limited supply is a boom for landlords.

According to the latest census data, homeownership rates among younger adults have been on a steady decline since the mid 2000's. The millennial generation is now being referred to by many as generation rent. This trend has some wondering if rental housing is the new American dream.

Many communities across the nation are struggling to deal with the harsh realities of declining home values and increasing numbers of rental properties in their neighborhoods. Our local community needs to prepare for this as the makeup of our community is rapidly changing before our eyes. Homes that were once family owned are frequently being bought up and are being turned into rental properties.

What will this surge in renters bring to our neighborhoods? Some people believe that some renters don't take care of rental properties as well as homeowners, and that some renters are more disconnected from their neighborhoods. Some home owners fear that more rentals coming into their

neighborhoods will hurt their home values too. According to our records over 60% of the properties in the City of Williamsport are rental properties. This number is much higher than it was 20 years ago.

As many of us already know, Williamsport has been dealing with this trend for many years prior to this latest housing crisis. The face of our fine city has been steadily changing. A quick trip around town will reveal once vibrant neighborhoods full of families who knew and helped one another have evolved into neighborhoods full of strangers who rarely know one another.

The underlying problem in Williamsport is that the dysfunctional behavior of a FEW and the enabling behavior of MANY has crippled our communities system or lack thereof for responding. The traditional role of property management holds that a landlord's job is to profit from owning a property and it is the job of the police to address chronic dysfunctional behavior. This leads to enabling these behaviors to continue and pushes the burden on those with less power to deal with problems that if addressed early enough could prevent crime from occurring.

As a result of a refusal to accept responsibility, property values have declined and the Williamsport of old is no more. This lack of community ownership is evident in not only our outward appearance such as blighted buildings but also in our inner beings such as our attitudes towards one another and our lack of responsibility to our fellow citizens.

Captain Timothy S. Miller

THIS MESSAGE IS APPROVED BY MAYOR GABRIEL CAMPANA