



CITY OF WILLIAMSPORT

BUREAU OF POLICE

Investigations Division Commander

CHANGE

More misleading information is being spread regarding the proposed Rental ordinance. The latest misinformation is that there are currently 127 sections or subsections of city law that can and should be enforced by the Codes department. This would lead the general public to believe that these sections will help reduce the drug related crime since that is what we have been talking about in regards to the Rental ordinance. I have reviewed the codified ordinances in its entirety and that information is entirely misleading. There is not one ordinance on the books that provides a tool to help us in the fight to find a solution to the drug related crime we are experiencing. While there are many ordinances currently on the books we must look at them for their intended purposes.

There are several ordinances on the books that were written to prevent disturbing the peace. These ordinances include things like unnecessary noise, squealing of tires, unreasonable use of a mechanical device and loitering. Some of these mentioned were enacted in 1972 with the others enacted in 1996. These ordinances were aimed at curbing disruptive behavior being caused by the downtown "cruising" that was popular during those eras of time. There are also ordinances on the books that deal with nuisances. These nuisances include things like accumulation of garbage, rubbish, abandoned vehicles, and junk such as scrap metal. Sorry but drug related nuisances are not covered by this ordinance. Other nuisances covered under this ordinance are animals, snow and ice removal, solid waste and property maintenance code. As Mr. Gerardi our codes administrator repeatedly stated, many of the ordinances including the rental inspection ordinance are geared at cleaning up the outside of these properties. Many of our citizens don't realize that before codes can do an inspection of a rental property they must give prior notice. What self respecting individual involved in criminal activity is going to allow evidence of this in plain view for the Codes department to see when they come to do their inspection? Especially since they are given advance notice of this visit.

While it is 100% fact that there are many City ordinances currently on the books, we need to take a hard look at these ordinances and when they were enacted or adopted. Many of these ordinances were enacted to address the problems of the Williamsport of old. Williamsport has evolved and so has the problems within the city. How can the citizens of Williamsport expect the drug related crime problem in the city to change if we continue to do things the same way and rely on the same old methods and traditional approaches that we KNOW are not working. Change is difficult but sometimes it is necessary for the common good. **Law enforcement has evolved all across the country except in Williamsport. We are expected to rely on good old fashioned police work. Good old fashioned police WORK worked on Williamsport's "good ole boys" of the 70's and 80's but we are no longer dealing with the "good ole boys". We are dealing with a much more hardened and determined group that are willing to destroy Williamsport as a means of their own survival.**