

ORDINANCE 2010-05

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 13 “HOUSING”, OF THE *REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN*

WHEREAS, the Construction Official has made certain recommendations to revisions to Chapter 13 of the Borough Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Hightstown; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Board has reviewed and concurs with these recommendations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown as follows (additions are shown with underline; deletions by ~~strike through~~):
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Section 1. Chapter 13 “Housing” is hereby amended as follows:

Subsections:

13-3-00 Housing Standards for Owner Occupied Units and Rental Units.

13-3-1 Maintenance.*

13-3-2 Sump Pump and Sewer Line Clean-Outs.

13-3-3 Water Supply.

13-3-4 Plumbing and Heating.

13-3-5 Electrical.

13-3-6 Smoke Alarms Required.

13-3-7 Fences.

13-3-8 Use and Occupancy of Space.

13-3-9 Ventilation.

13-3-10 Historic Landmarks.

13-3-11 Egress

13-3.12 Signs

Subsection 13-3-00 Housing Standards for Owner Occupied Units and Rental Units.

Standards applicable to dwelling units which are owner-occupied and dwelling units and lodging units which are rented to tenants (all dwellings and dwelling units). (1991 Code AIV; Ord. No. 823 § 3)

Subsection 13-3-1 Maintenance.*

a. Every foundation, floor, wall, ceiling, door, window, roof or other part of a building shall be maintained in a safe, sanitary, and structurally sound condition so as not

to pose a threat to the public health, safety or welfare, and capable of the use intended by its design. Any exterior part or parts thereof shall be maintained weatherproof and properly surface-coated where required to prevent deterioration.

b. Every inside and outside stairway, every porch and every appurtenance thereto shall be so constructed as to be safe to use and capable of safely supporting the imposed dead and live loads and shall be kept in sound condition and good repair. As of the effective date of this section, every stairway having four (4) or more risers shall be properly bannistered and safely balustraded pursuant to the Uniform Construction Code of the State of New Jersey~~BOCA regulations~~.

c. Every porch, balcony, roof or similar place higher than thirty (30) inches above the ground used for egress or for use by occupants shall be provided with adequate railings or parapets. Such protective railings or parapets shall be properly balustraded and shall not be less than three (3) feet in height.

d. Every roof, wall, window, exterior door and hatchway shall be free from holes or leaks that would permit the entrance of water within a dwelling or be a cause of dampness.

e. Every dwelling shall be free from rodents, vermin and insects. Rodent or vermin extermination and rodentproofing may be required by the Health Department.

f. Every building, dwelling, dwelling unit, and all other areas of the premises shall be clean and free from garbage or rubbish and hazards to safety. Lawns, hedges and bushes shall be kept trimmed and not permitted to become overgrown, thereby becoming a hazard to the public health, safety and welfare. Dead or broken limbs which may pose a threat to the safety and welfare of the public shall be removed.

g. The Housing Inspector may order the owner to clean, repair, paint, whitewash or paper any walls or ceilings within a dwelling which have deteriorated so as to provide a harborage for rodents or vermin.

h. Every sidewalk, walkway and driveway shall be maintained in such a manner as not to pose a safety hazard. There must be at least seven (7) foot clearance from the sidewalk to the lowest tree branch overhanging the sidewalk, and shrubbery must not overhang or obstruct the sidewalk.

i. All chimneys, smokestacks and similar appurtenances shall be maintained structurally safe, sound and in good repair. Various and sundry outbuildings, garages and sheds shall be maintained so as to be safe, and any exterior part or parts thereof shall be maintained weatherproof and properly surface-coated where required to prevent deterioration. All sheds erected after the effective date of this section shall be safely anchored. (1991 Code § 121-6; Ord. No. 823 § 3)

* Editor's Note: For additional regulations on property maintenance, see Chapter XIV.

Subsection 13-3-2 Sump Pump and Sewer Line Clean-Outs.

No sump pump shall be connected to any sanitary sewer line within the Borough. All sewer line clean-outs shall be at least one (1) foot above floor level. This subsection shall be enforced by the Housing Inspector or the Superintendent of the Advanced Wastewater Treatment Plant in accordance with the provisions of subsection 19-3.1g. of Chapter XIX governing wastewater discharges. Certificates of Compliance, pursuant to Sections 13-7 and 13-8 of this chapter shall be not issued prior to compliance with the provisions of subsection 19-3.1g. of Chapter XIX. (1991 Code § 121-7; Ord. No. 823 § 3; Ord. No. 94-6 § 3)

Subsection 13-3-3 Water Supply.

Every dwelling and dwelling unit shall be provided with a safe supply of potable water meeting the standards set forth in the Potable Water Standards as published by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and Energy. (1991 Code § 121-8; Ord. No. 823 § 3)

Subsection 13-3-4 Plumbing and Heating.

a. All plumbing and heating systems shall be in satisfactory working order.

b. No room heater, heating stove, space heater or tank water heater designed for the use of kerosene, gasoline, oil, gas, wood, coke, charcoal or coal as a fuel shall be used in any dwelling or dwelling unit unless it has an approved direct smoke pipe or flue connection to a properly constructed chimney capable of carrying all of the products of combustion to the outside air. (1991 Code § 121-9; Ord. No. 823 § 3)

Subsection 13-3-5 Electrical.

The electrical system shall be in proper working order so as not to pose a threat of electrical shock, fire or other hazard. All Groundfault Interrupt Outlets shall function as designed. All plates and covers shall be in place. (1991 Code § 121-10; Ord. No. 823 § 3)

Subsection 13-3-6 Smoke Alarms Required.

All dwellings and dwelling units shall have a smoke-sensitive alarm device on each level of the structure and outside each separate sleeping area and located on or near the ceiling in accordance with P.L. 1991, c. 92. (1991 Code § 121-11; Ord. No. 823-3)

Subsection 13-3-7 Fences.

Every fence shall be maintained and kept in a condition which shall not pose structural, health or safety dangers. (1991 Code § 121-12; Ord. No. 823-3)

Subsection 13-3-8 Use and Occupancy of Space.

a. Every dwelling unit shall contain at least one hundred fifty (150) square feet of floor space for the first occupant thereof and at least one hundred (100) additional square feet of floor space for every additional occupant thereof, such floor space to be calculated on the basis of total habitable room area.

b. In every dwelling unit of two (2) or more rooms, every room occupied for sleeping purposes by one (1) occupant shall contain at least seventy (70) square feet of floor space, and every room occupied for sleeping purposes by more than one (1) occupant shall contain at least fifty (50) square feet of floor space for each occupant thereof. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in every lodging unit every room occupied for sleeping purposes by one (1) occupant shall contain at least eighty (80) square feet of floor space, and every room occupied for sleeping purposes by more than one (1) occupant shall contain at least sixty (60) square feet of floor space for each occupant thereof.

c. At least one-half (1/2) of the floor area of every habitable room shall have a ceiling height of at least seven (7) feet. The floor area of that part of any room where the ceiling is less than five (5) feet shall not be considered as part of the floor area in computing the total floor area of the room for the purpose of determining the maximum permissible occupancy thereof.

d. No room in a dwelling may be used for sleeping if the floor level of the room is lower than three and one-half (3 1/2) feet below the average grade of the ground adjacent to and within fifteen (15) feet of the exterior walls of the room.

e. A room located below the level of the ground but with the floor level less than three and one-half (3 1/2) feet below and the average grade of the ground adjacent to and within fifteen (15) feet of the exterior walls of the room may be used for sleeping, provided that the walls and floor thereof in contact with the earth have been dampproofed in accordance with a method approved by the Housing Inspector and that the windows thereof are at least fifteen (15) feet from the nearest building or wall. (1991 Code § 121-13; Ord. No. 823 § 3)

f. Keyed locks on bedroom doors are prohibited. Privacy locks are allowed on bedroom doors, provided that the lock can be opened easily and without the use of force from the outside of the room, or from any hallway or common area, in the event of emergency.

g. Non-habitable spaces (including storage and closet areas) shall not be used as bedrooms or otherwise occupied for sleeping purposes.

Subsection 13-3-9 Ventilation.

All dwellings shall be adequately ventilated; every bathroom and water closet compartment shall have ventilation provided either by a window, skylight or mechanical ventilation system. (1991 Code § 121-14; Ord. No. 823 § 3)

Subsection 13-3-10 Historic Landmarks.

Upon written request of the property owner, an historic landmark may be exempted by the Housing Inspector from strict compliance with the requirements of this chapter if such strict compliance would compromise the historic significance of the property; provided, however, that no exemption shall be granted which, in the opinion of the Housing Inspector, would create a health or safety hazard or allow such a hazard to continue. (1991 Code § 121-15; Ord. No. 823 § 3)

Subsection 13-3-11 Egress

All exit doors shall be readily opened from the side from which egress is to be made, without the use of a key, unless the key is permanently affixed in the lock, and without use of a combination lock, electronic code or similar special knowledge or effort. (Ord. No. 2002-20)

13-3-12. Signs.

a. Posting of signs for rent, or advertising room or rooms for rent by any means of publication (whether through broadcast media, print media, or by electronic means, including the internet), is prohibited for any property in the Borough of Hightstown for which no license has been issued in accord with Sections 4-1, 13-8, and 13-10 of this Code to qualify that property as a boarding house, rooming house, or rooming unit.

b. Posting of signs, or advertising an apartment or house for rent by any means of publication (whether through broadcast media, print media, or by electronic means, including the internet), is prohibited for any property in the Borough of Hightstown for which a Rental Certificate of Compliance has not been issued by the Housing Inspector, pursuant to Subsection 13-8-1 of this Code.

Section 2. Severability. If any sentence, paragraph or section of this Ordinance, or the application thereof to any persons or circumstances shall be adjudged by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, or if by legislative action any sentence, paragraph or section of this Ordinance shall lose its force and effect, such judgment or action shall not affect, impair or void the remainder of this Ordinance.

Section 3. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon final passage and publication in accordance with the law.

Section 4. Repealer. All other Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

Introduction::

Adoption:

DEBRA L. SOPRONYI,
MUNICIPAL CLERK

ROBERT F. PATTEN,
MAYOR