

Annual Town Meeting - May 8, 2023
Article 53 - Rental Registration Bylaw

Initial Fin Comm Vote (4/6/23): 3-3-1
Final Fin Comm Vote (5//8/23): 5-2-0

On Behalf of the Finance Committee: Elaine Baird

Article 53 intends to accomplish two goals. The first goal is to provide an inventory of all residential rental housing in Orleans, long-term and short-term, which is critical to our ongoing knowledge of housing availability. The second goal is to require landlords to attest to the number of smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in their rental properties. No registration fee is required, since no costs will be incurred. ONLY by complaint can the Fire Department inspect a property.

The Finance Committee is conflicted about this. Although these two goals are admirable, as written, this Article does not meet the critical needs for safety supervision of rental properties. Article 53 would not have saved that 6-year old Kyi Bourne's life. We still need a well-conceived program for a safety protocol for rental properties. Because this Article falls short, some Finance Committee members voted against this Article.

With the proposed Article, we do not improve in a material way our critical need for further safety supervision of rental properties.

So, although the Finance Committee supports the need for a housing inventory and safe rentals, those of us who recommend rejection of this Article want to see the Article substantially improved before its approval.

Others of us support the Article because it is a step in the right direction, and with actual experience, we can improve the process after we get going.

Thank you.