

2006-2007 ANNUAL REPORT

Commission on Landlord –Tenant Affairs (COLTA)

COLTA Membership

The ordinance establishing the Commission on Landlord and Tenant Affairs provides for the appointment of twelve members and is intended to include representation from Takoma Park tenants, homeowners, and landlords. There are currently eleven members serving on COLTA. Five of the current members are home owners, three are landlords, and three are tenants. Three of the members whose terms expire June 30, 2007 are seeking reappointment to the Commission, leaving one vacant seat to be filled. A roster of the current membership is attached.

The Commission is an experienced group of volunteers, appointed by the Council for staggered three year terms. During their respective tenure, each of the members have heard complaints on landlord-tenant issues or rent increase petition objections. New Commissioners undergo an orientation session where the Takoma Park Landlord-Tenant and COLTA Codes, administrative regulations, hearing procedures and forms are reviewed. Commissioners also routinely attend COLTA Hearings as observers prior to sitting on a hearing panel.

COLTA Case Load Activity

Caseload Activity	Jan-Dec 2006	Jan-June 2007
COLTA Cases Filed	65	37
Landlord Tenant Cases	17	10
Mediated (a)	15 (a)	7 (a)
COLTA Hearings	2	3
Security Deposit Refunds	1	2
Defective Tenancy / Notice to Vacate	1	1(b)
Rent Stabilization Rent Increase Petitions	48	27
Preliminary Administrative Decisions (PAD) Issued	46	11
Preliminary Administrative Decisions (PAD) Pending	0	16
Rent Increase Petition Objections	2	1(b)

(a) Complaints mediated by HCD Landlord Tenant Mediation Specialist

(b) Hearing Pending

COLTA Business Meetings

COLTA conducts a minimum of one business meeting per year in addition to the hearings which are scheduled to address unresolved complaints filed by landlords and tenants in addition to any objections filed in response to Preliminary Administrative Decisions rendered by the Commission.

The minutes of COLTA's December 19, 2006 business meeting are attached.

Other COLTA Activities

Commission members are provided drafts of proposed housing legislative initiatives and administrative regulations. Their comments have been of assistance in the development of the COLTA Administrative Regulations and in the ongoing review of the city's Rent Stabilization Law.

COLTA Staffing

Responsibility for the staffing of the Commission has been assigned to the Housing and Community Development Department's Landlord Tenant Division. The Assistant City Attorney serves as the Commission's Executive Director.

Attachments: Commission on Landlord and Tenant Affairs Membership Roster (June 2007)
COLTA Business Meeting Minutes (December 19, 2006)
"Your COLTA Hearing – What to expect and how to prepare for your hearing"

July 1, 2006