



# City of Austin

Founded by Congress, Republic of Texas, 1839  
Austin Code Department  
P.O. Box 1088, Austin, Texas 78767



TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Carl Smart, Austin Code Department Director

DATE: September 9, 2014

SUBJECT: 7001 Isabelle Drive

I write to update you on the status of the code case for 7001 Isabelle Drive concerning the screening of a recreational vehicle (RV). The property owner, Matthew Palmer, met with me on July 10, 2014 in an attempt to resolve the compliance issues, however, we were unable to reach an agreement. Deputy City Manager, Michael McDonald and Austin Code staff will meet with Mr. Palmer on September 17, 2014 to discuss the outstanding compliance issues. I understand Mr. Palmer has been in contact with some of the Austin City Council Members. This memo is intended to provide you with our position on the issue as it relates to the Austin City Code.

On June 20, 2013 Code staff responded to a complaint at 7001 Isabelle Drive regarding an unscreened recreational vehicle (RV) being stored at a residence. Upon inspection, the inspector found a large RV stored in the front side yard. A notice of violation was sent to the property owner to screen the RV. He built a six foot fence that had a two foot opening along the bottom section of the fence and a solid four foot section along the top of the fence. Although the opening along the bottom of the fence did not meet the requirements for properly screening the RV from public view, the field inspector and supervisor allowed the owner to use this method and closed the case. They inadvertently misinterpreted the screening requirements by allowing a solid to open ratio style fencing.

On April 24, 2014 Code staff responded to another complaint at 7001 Isabelle Drive concerning an unscreened RV. Upon inspection, the inspector found the large RV at the site was unscreened. The inspector who responded to this complaint was not the same inspector or supervisor who responded to the June 20, 2013 complaint. Therefore, when the owner reinstalled the fence that had the two foot opening along the bottom of the fence, the new inspector informed him that it did not meet the correct screening requirements.

City Land Development Code section 25-2-893 requirements state that a recreational vehicle (RV) stored on the premises of a residential property must be either in an enclosed building or screened from public view with a solid wood or masonry fence at least six feet high. SCREENED means hidden from the view of a person standing at ground level on an abutting site by an architectural or landscape feature that is, or will grow to, at least six feet in height.

It is our hope that we can clear up this issue with Mr. Palmer at the September 17, 2014 meeting. We certainly apologized to Mr. Palmer for the confusion caused by the case being closed prematurely in 2013, however, we think the new code inspector is correct in requiring full screening of the RV.

Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

cc: Marc A. Ott, City Manager  
Michael McDonald, Deputy City Manager