



Application No.: ZC-2017-013

Attachment "C"

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AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CUTLER BAY, FLORIDA, AMENDING SECTION 3-58 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES NC, NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER DISTRICT REGARDING RESIDENTIAL USES AND RELATED LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

H1

Keys ‘odd bird’ faces eviction after 30 years on Duval

BY GWEN FILOSA
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For 30 years, Anita McGee has lived at the same spot in Key West: a large one-bedroom apart-

ment above Duval Street in the center of everything on the island’s main drag.

At a time when renting a room in a house is going for \$1,300 a month, a studio apartment fetches \$1,600, and a one-bedroom runs over \$2,000, here is what McGee has been paying for decades: \$500 a month. Utilities included. For a woman who takes home \$1,639 a month, including Social Security.

But now, the 71-year-old is back to square one when it comes to finding housing. She faces eviction if she doesn’t move out of the Duval Street pad by April 30.

Her building at 532 Duval St. was owned for decades by Stella Rylander, who watched out for McGee by letting her live in a below-market price apartment.

But Rylander died last June, leaving a will that



McGee

doesn’t mention McGee but leaves everything to her children, Jay and Jan Rylander.

McGee came home in February to find a notice telling her to leave the property.

“There is no eviction process,” said attorney Sam Kaufman, who represents the Rylander estate and is also a city commissioner. “We’ve given her notice. Her unit is in very, very bad shape. I have a fiduciary obligation to maintain the property.”

McGee is a week-to-week tenant in an apartment where the utilities run up to \$300 a month.

Kaufman said McGee essentially lives rent-free, or at the most \$50 a week.

“She can’t really do that forever,” he said.

Friends have been holding fundraisers for McGee, a straight-talking woman with a sly sense of humor. But her housing search, especially after Hurricane Irma only made the affordable housing market worse, is no joke.

“This is affecting my health,” McGee said, breaking into tears, after getting a chest X-ray recently. “I’ve got 30 years worth of stuff and I don’t want to lose that.”

McGee is a Baltimore native, but she considers Key West her home. Period. She’s been here since 1987 and is a known character, riding her bike around the island and walking her two small dogs.

“I was a dishwasher at a restaurant,” she said. “There were tons of jobs here, like hitting the jackpot.”

Her jobs have always been taking care of others: their dirty plates, their relatives. She once cared for a man with diabetes to pay the bills, and she has been a housekeeper. She never married, has no children and is estranged from her family. Her friends in Key West are her family.

Asked why she never saved for retirement, McGee said she never planned to retire.

“I work seven days a week and even though I’m sick I’m working today,” McGee said, while at her parking lot attendant job on a recent afternoon.

When people tell her she needs to consider moving to the mainland because she can’t afford Key West, McGee lights up.

“Why do I have to move to the mainland? I managed to make a life here,” she said. “Now I’ll be pushed out of here like a bum. I need an apartment where I can live with me and my dogs. That shouldn’t be too much to ask. A lot of working people in Key West want the same

thing.”

McGee then says the oft-repeated phrase of Key West workers: “Rich people aren’t going to do the jobs we do. They’re not going to be parking lot attendants and housemaids.”

For renters, Key West has become a frightening place. Landlords seek higher rents because their own expenses have risen or they simply know they can get it. It’s not uncommon to see a post on Facebook offering a living room for rent.

To get in most places, you must provide first and last month’s rent plus a security deposit that is almost always the equivalent of a month’s rent. Also, many places won’t allow pets.

McGee has appealed to nonprofits, churches and other charities. She is on the waiting list for senior housing and affordable housing. But with eviction looming over her, her friends are worried she’ll be left homeless.

“My fear is it will come down to the last minute and she won’t survive,” said David Sloan, a friend of McGee’s who made a name for himself in Key West as an entrepreneur.

Sloan, who co-wrote the book “Quit Your Job and Move to Key West,” gave up trying to pay Key West rents a year ago and moved up to Islamorada where a friend offered him a trailer for \$700 a month.

Sloan affectionately calls McGee an “odd bird,” and hopes someone will come to her rescue so she can stay in Key West.

“Key West is a compassionate place,” Sloan said. “Somebody out there has space and who can help out a woman who’s 71 years old and who has been a part of the heart and soul of Key West for so long.”

Gwen Filosa:
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TOWN OF CUTLER BAY
NOTICE OF ADOPTION
OF AN ORDINANCE
AMENDING THE
PERMITTED USE LIST
AND RELATED LAND
DEVELOPMENT
REGULATIONS WITHIN
THE NEIGHBORHOOD
CENTER DISTRICT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Council of the Town of Cutler Bay, Florida, sitting in its capacity as the Local Planning Agency, will hold a public meeting on **Wednesday, April 18, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the Town Hall Council Chambers, 10720 Caribbean Boulevard, Cutler Bay, Florida. The purpose of the public meeting is to consider and make recommendations to the Town Council, regarding the Ordinance described below.

PLEASE NOTE that immediately following the meeting of the Town Local Planning Agency the Town Council will hold a public hearing and first reading of the Ordinance described below:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CUTLER BAY, FLORIDA, AMENDING SECTION 3-58 OF THE CODE OF ORDINANCES NC, NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER DISTRICT REGARDING RESIDENTIAL USES AND RELATED LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS; PROVIDING FOR SEVERABILITY; PROVIDING FOR CONFLICTS; PROVIDING FOR CODIFICATION; AND PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

The Town Council may continue or defer the hearing to a new date and time certain without further notice provided the date and time of the continuance or deferral is announced at the hearing. The Ordinance in its entirety may be inspected at the Office of the Town Clerk during regular business hours.

Persons wishing to appeal any decision made by the Town Council, with respect to any matter considered at such hearing, will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made; such record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based (F.S. 286.0105).

Any and all interested parties may appear at the above meeting and be heard with respect to the proposed items.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), persons needing special accommodations to participate in these proceedings should contact the Town Clerk's Office for assistance at (305) 234-4262 no later than four (4) business days prior to such proceeding.

Debra E. Eastman, MMC
Town Clerk

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