

Moermond, Marcia (CI-StPaul)

From: Jill Dobie <jill.m.dobie@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 26, 2017 3:14 PM
To: Moermond, Marcia (CI-StPaul)
Subject: RLH FCO 17-22 (1737 Stanford Avenue)
Attachments: RE: Request for Ceiling Height Variance--Additional information

Ms. Moermond,

In reviewing online documents in this matter, we found a copy of the email the Building Inspector sent you last Friday in which he stated that the second floor bedroom in the rental house we own at 1737 Stanford Avenue should not be permitted to be used as a bedroom due to the fact the ceiling is 3" under the 7' requirement height for bedroom ceilings.

In your email referring our request for a height variance to the Building Inspector, you indicated that he would consider several factors, including: "the width of the stairs leading to the upper level, the existence and placement of handrails, presence of smoke alarms and presence of an egress window." We presented the Building Inspector with documentation regarding all of these factors, including photographs of the stairs, the landing, multiple smoke/carbon monoxide detectors on the landing and bedroom, the bedroom entry, and the egress windows in the bedroom. A copy of our email to the Building Inspector with this information is attached.

The Building Inspector did not address any of these factors in his decision. Instead, he summarily rejected our request for a variance because a "room must meet a minimum ceiling height of 7 feet before we can entertain any exceptions." It appears there is no instance in which the Building Inspector would grant a variance from the 7' height requirement.

This position is at odds with past decisions of the Office of Legislative Hearings granting variances from the 7' ceiling height requirement. In the past two years, there have been at least three cases in which the Office of Legislative Hearings granted variances for ceilings 4" to 6" under 7' in bedrooms that appear smaller than the one at issue here (per photographs included in those cases).

We are unsure of the process going forward but would like the opportunity to present our case for a 3" variance from the 7' ceiling height requirement to the Office of Legislative Hearings.

We would appreciate it if you could advise us on how to proceed in this matter.

Thank you.

Jill & Brian Dobie
651-324-3083
jill.m.dobie@gmail.com