



Old Astoria Neighborhood Association (OANA)  
www.OANA-NY.org

**“Fix it, Don’t Fine It” for Housing!**

**Feb 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

OANA applauds the Mayor’ initiative “Fix it, Don’t Fine It” that will provide financial relief to small business. The goal is to eliminate fines for many first time violations and create grace periods to fix the issue.

The mayor’s office gave examples of first-time violations that will be forgiven. They include a \$100 fine that a business owner could be slapped with for not cleaning 18 inches from the curb into the street; or a \$560 fine for an air compressor deemed too loud.

The city will also provide grace periods for a larger list of violations. They plan to give business owners more time to fix violations like failure to put a scale in clear sight of customer (\$75); failure to disclose details about layaway plans (\$260 penalty); and the failure to post a clear price list at laundromats (\$375 penalty).

We ask that this concept be expanded to include the real estate and construction industry to increase our inventory of apartments. The surest way to affordability is to increase supply so it eclipses demand.

On May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2019 OANA released a position on the [new rental laws and apartment affordability in NYC](#).

In Section 2, Item 2, we stated the following:

“If there is an inspection done by the city and a building violation is found, the Landlord (or developer) should be given a grace period to eliminate the issue before fines are applied. This incentivizes the landlord to take care of this as soon as possible. Also, it would reduce the adversarial relationship between the city and landlords. Landlords would be more comfortable inviting the city in to make inspections to make sure they comply. This would eliminate extra costs that are usually passed on to the tenants and increase compliance and safety to all parties.”

The majority of developers are small business men, not mega developers, and they should be afforded the same consideration as all small business owners.

And at the end of the day, reduction in their costs would be passed along to renters.

Too often, these fines have been used as an income source for the city, and if they are contested, are usually eliminated or reduced.

If after the grace period the issue is not rectified, the fines should be aggressively pursued!

Also, if the violation could cause imminent danger, the job should be shut down, but should not be fined if fixed within a predetermined grace period.