

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 14, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 1 OF TITLE 8 OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

ISSUE: Consideration of an ordinance to amend Chapter 1 of Title 8 of the Alexandria City Code to redefine the boundaries in which the spot blight abatement program may be enforced.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council pass the ordinance on first reading and schedule it for second reading, public hearing and final passage on Saturday, June 16. (Attachment 1)

DISCUSSION: During its 2001 session, the General Assembly amended Virginia Code § 36-49.1:1 to allow localities to enforce the provisions of the spot blight abatement program throughout their jurisdictions whether inside or outside of a conservation or redevelopment area.

The spot blight abatement program was originally established by City Council on October 16, 1999. At that time, as then permitted by State law, the program applied only outside of the City's conservation and redevelopment districts. Since the inception of the program, City staff have cited three properties under the program. All three of those properties had been long standing cases for numerous city agencies, including Police, Code Enforcement and Planning and Zoning. Two of the buildings located on properties previously cited under this program have been demolished. City Council heard the remaining case on September 16, 2000. During that hearing the affected property owner submitted a work plan to eliminate the blight on his property, which was ultimately carried out and the property remains in compliance with the code.

To date, the spot blight abatement program has enabled the City to remove or otherwise eliminate blight in areas outside of our designated conservation and redevelopment districts. The amended language in the proposed ordinance will give the City the authority to apply the program in our conservation and redevelopment districts. This will give staff the ability to help eliminate blighted properties in the City's more sensitive areas.

FISCAL IMPACT: The fiscal impact of this program has historically been assessed on a case by case basis. Blight abatement in conservation and redevelopment areas should be viewed as a means of protecting property values and; therefore, can increase property values and tax revenues. However, certain initiatives, such as the repair or acquisition of properties under the spot blight abatement program may result in legal, material and personnel costs that, while potentially recoverable, may be carried by the City for some time.

ATTACHMENTS: 1: Proposed Ordinance

STAFF: Thomas M. Hawkins, Fire Chief
Art D. Dahlberg, Director, Code Enforcement

EXHIBIT NO. 2

17
6-12-01

Introduction and first reading:	6/12/01
Public hearing:	6/16/01
Second reading and enactment:	6/16/01

INFORMATION ON PROPOSED ORDINANCE

Title

AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 8-1-141 (Purpose) of Article I (SPOT BLIGHT ABATEMENT), Chapter 1 (BUILDING CODE), Title 8 (BUILDING CODE REGULATIONS) of the Code of the City of Alexandria, 1981, as amended.

Summary

The proposed ordinance allows the use of spot blight abatement procedures anywhere in a locality and lifts previous restrictions limiting the use of these procedures to property located outside of conservation and redevelopment areas.

Sponsor

Staff

Thomas Hawkins, Fire Chief
Arthur Dahlberg, Director of Code Enforcement
Ignacio Pessoa, City Attorney
Melissa Luck, Assistant City Attorney

Authority

§ 36-49.1:1, Code of Virginia (1950), as amended

Estimated Costs of Implementation

None

Attachments in Addition to Proposed Ordinance and its Attachments (if any)

None

EXHIBIT NO. 3

17
6-12-01

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE to amend and reordain Section 8-1-141 (Purpose) of Article I (SPOT BLIGHT ABATEMENT), Chapter 1 (BUILDING CODE), TITLE 8 (BUILDING CODE REGULATIONS) of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended.

THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA HEREBY ORDAINS:

Section 1. That Section 8-1-141 of The Code of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, 1981, as amended, be, and the same hereby is, amended and reordained to read as follows:

Section 8-1-141 Purpose.

The purpose of this article is to provide for the repair or other disposal, or the acquisition and repair or other disposal, by the city of blighted property ~~which is located outside of conservation or redevelopment areas, as such areas are defined in section 36-49 and section 36-49.1, respectively, or the Code of Virginia (1950), as amended.~~

Section 2. That this ordinance shall become effective on June 16, 2001.

KERRY J. DONLEY
Mayor

Introduction: 6/12/01
First Reading: 6/12/01
Publication:
Public Hearing:
Second Reading:
Final Passage:

N.B. Underlining is not part of ordinance, but denotes material that is new or amended.
Strikeouts are not part of the ordinance, but denote material that is being deleted.