



HEARING NOTES

Bill: 22-0101R

Informational Hearing - Mayor’s Recommendations - 30-Day Review of Strategies to Eliminate Vacant and Abandoned Properties

Committee: Economic and Community Development

Chaired By: Councilwoman Sharon Green Middleton

Hearing Date: July 12, 2022

Time (Beginning): 2:31 PM

Time (Ending): 4:50 PM

Location: Clarence “Du” Burns Council Chambers / Virtual WEBEX

Total Attendance: Approximately 90

Committee Members in Attendance:

John Bullock Mark Conway Ryan Dorsey Robert Stokes Odette Ramos

Bill Synopsis in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Attendance sheet in the file?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Agency reports read?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Video or audio-digitally recorded?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Certification of advertising/posting notices in the file?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Evidence of notification to property owners?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> n/a
Final vote taken at this hearing?	<input type="checkbox"/> yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> n/a
Motioned by:	Councilmember		
Seconded by:	Councilmember		
Final Vote:			

Major Speakers

(This is not an attendance record.)

- Christopher Shorter, Chief Administrative Officer
- Henry Raymond, Director, Department of Finance

- Alice Kennedy, Department of Housing and Community Development
 - Ebony Thomas Department of Law
 - Jason Mitchell, Department of Public Works
 - Christina Flowers, Real Care Providers
 - Rachel Butrim
 - Sean Closkey
 - Lacey Marino
 - Josh Fannon
 - Angela Scott
 - Hieu Truong
 - Robilyn Heath
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Major Issues Discussed

1. Chairwoman Middleton opened the meeting, introduced committee members and City representatives and read the resolution into the record.
2. Councilmember Ramos provided written and oral testimony about the purpose of the resolution. She spoke about the need for strategies and resources to eradicate vacant housing.
3. Christopher Shorter provided information about the process used to gather recommendations to eradicate vacant housing. He emphasized that the administration is committed to eradicating vacant housing. A March 1, 2022 memorandum outlining suggested recommendation was prepared and a work group is in the process of implementing the recommendations. Each recommendation has been changed into a virtual task card with an assigned owner. All recommendations have been categorized into actions which can be accomplished in 3, 6, 9 months as well as 1 -2 years' timeframes. Some actions require separate financial allocations and will be prioritized. Various strategies are being implemented.
4. Alice Kennedy provided a progress report (see handout) of initiatives implemented to address vacant housing.
5. Henry Raymond provided information about recent expenditures for vacant housing. Recommendations outlined in the work group report will require more funding. The City's Annual Financial Plan will be reviewed to consider the impact of funding for vacant housing initiatives. He explained the City's bond rating, which is currently AA.
6. The committee discussed:
 - the need to have future reports summarizing implementation of the recommendations;
 - planned and emergency demolitions;
 - demolition funding;
 - leveraging of funds for the various strategies,
 - the City's bonding capacity in order to fund recommendations;
 - a process for understanding prevention of vacancies;
 - helping owner's with homeowners' insurance issues;
 - owner's understanding property valuation;
 - owners' access to housing information and resources;

- creation of a blight elimination task force;
- the need for community and stakeholder input;
- Impact Investment Areas;
- In Rem process for buildings and lots;
- transitioning to implementation of the In-Rem process
- the connection between fire and vacancies;
- financing for redevelopment/rehabilitation;
- a national report on the creation of vacancy problems due to exclusionary zoning
- updating the City’s deed and title research process
- reduction of blight near vacancies;

7. The website “Buying Into Baltimore” is active: [Buying Into Baltimore](#)

<https://www.livebaltimore.com/resident-resources/financial-incentives/buying-into-baltimore>

8. Agency representatives testified on behalf of their respective agencies

9. The Chair called for public testimony.

10. The hearing was recessed.

Further Study

Was further study requested?

Yes No

If yes, describe.

- Updates to agency reports to include oral testimony provided at today’s hearing
- Councilmember Conway would like a report or information on estate planning from the Department of Housing and Community Development.
- Map of Investment Impact Areas and properties to be impacted from the Department of Housing and Community Development.
- Analysis of funding needed to mow and care for vacant properties and lots from the Department of Public Works.

Committee Vote:

Sharon Green Middleton, Chair Yea
 John Bullock: Yea
 Mark Conway: Yea
 Ryan Dorsey: Yea
 Antonio Glover: Absent
 Robert Stokes: Yea
 Odette Ramos: Yea

Jennifer L. Coates, Committee Staff

Date: July 13, 2022

cc: Bill File
OCS Chrono File