


FROM	NAME & TITLE	GARY W. COLE, ACTING DIRECTOR <i>G Cole</i>	CITY of BALTIMORE MEMO	
	AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS	DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING 417 E. FAYETTE STREET, 8 TH FLOOR		
	SUBJECT	CCB # 08-0210 – VACANT STRUCTURES – REQUISITES FOR TRANSFER		

TO

DATE:

The Honorable President and
Members of the City Council
City Hall, Room 400
100 N. Holliday Street

November 24, 2008

The Department of Planning has received City Council Bill #08-0210 for review. This legislation is “for the purpose of prohibiting the transfer of certain vacant structures without approved plans for the minimal repair of the structures; defining certain terms; and generally relating to the transfer of vacant structures.”

The Department of Planning has reviewed bill CCB#08-0210, and while we understand the intent behind this legislation, we believe there will be practical problems with the implementation of the proposed changes. The bill seeks to prevent vacant structures that are in poor physical condition from being transferred from one owner to another without the purchaser proving that a funded plan for the renovation of the building is in place. It would initially appear that this bill would limit speculators that acquire property with no real plans for improvement from buying and holding properties – we believe this is a laudable goal. However, there will be a practical problem in that the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) will have to review each case independently, and make a determination that the prospective purchaser has some form of funded plan, without guidance on what constitutes an acceptable plan, and an acceptable level of funding. Further, we suspect that prospective purchasers may want to proceed more carefully in today’s market, and that it may not be possible to have all of the required funding available and committed prior to purchase. We defer to DHCD to further detail potential impacts on their operations. For these reasons, the Department of Planning respectfully recommends disapproval of this bill.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Wolde Ararsa, Acting Land Use and Urban Design Division Chief at 410-396-4488.

GWC/ewt

- cc: Mr. Andrew Frank, Deputy Mayor
Mr. Demaune Millard, Chief of Staff
Ms. Angela Gibson, Mayor’s Office
The Honorable Rochelle “Rikki” Spector, Council Rep. for Planning Commission
Mr. Geoffrey Veale, Acting Zoning Administrator
Mr. Larry Greene, Councilmanic Services
Mr. Paul T. Graziano, Commissioner of Housing
Mr. David Tanner, BMZA
Ms. Nikol Nabors-Jackson, DHCD
Ms. Deepa Bhattacharyya, Law Department

