



BALTIMORE HOUSING

SHEILA DIXON
Mayor

PAUL T. GRAZIANO
Executive Director, HABCD
Commissioner, HCD

MEMORANDUM

To: The Honorable President and Members of the Baltimore City Council
c/o Karen Randle, Executive Secretary

From: Paul T. Graziano, Commissioner

Date: October 10, 2008

Re: **City Council Bill 08-0213 Vacant Lot Registration - Exceptions**

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has reviewed City Council Bill 08-0213, which was introduced for the purpose of excepting certain lots from the requirement to register vacant lots.

The current law requires owners of vacant lots to file annually a registration statement that provides the city contact information such as a telephone number and address. This basic information is essential for DHCD should the need arise to contact the owner if there is a problem associated with the lot such as sanitation. In addition to completing the form, the owner is required to pay a \$25.00 fee that contributes to our code enforcement efforts.

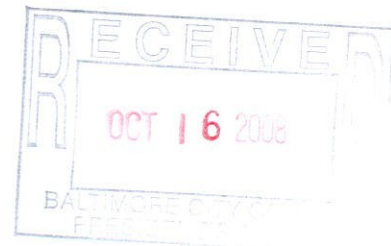
City Council Bill 08-0213 proposes the following exemptions to the vacant lot registration requirement: 1) Vacant lots immediately adjacent to a non-vacant property titled to the same owner of record as the vacant lot; 2) Vacant lots that have a parking pad actively used by a nearby property owner; and 3) Properties with part of the lot extends into Baltimore County. These three circumstances tend to generate the majority of the negative reaction to the registration requirements and DHCD therefore supports their exception from the current law with some specific amendments to the bill.

DHCD proposes that legislation be amended in order to narrow the scope of these exemptions. First, vacant lots should be exempted only if they adjoin the lot owner's primary residence. Second, lots containing parking pads should be exempted if those pads are located within one block of the owner's primary residence and conform to Baltimore Building Code Section 3110.2 regarding appropriate paving surfaces. Finally, DHCD recommends that all lots that extend beyond City limits should be exempted and not only those that project into Baltimore County.

The Department of Housing and Community Development supports the adoption of City Council Bill 08-0213 with amendment and defers to the Finance Department for the fiscal impact of these exceptions.

PTG:pmd

cc: Ms. Angela Gibson
Mr. Demaune Millard



F/A

