

MEMORANDUM

December 30, 2009

TO: Board of Mayor and Aldermen

FROM: Eric S. Stuckey, City Administrator
Vernon J. Gerth, ACA Community & Economic Development
Tom Marsh, Interim Director Building and Neighborhood Services
Clay Matthews, Housing Development Coordinator

SUBJECT: Voluntary Exterior Neighborhood Inspection Program

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the Board of Mayor and Aldermen (BOMA) with an overview of the recently piloted Voluntary Exterior Neighborhood Inspection Program.

Background

This past fall, Neighborhood Resource Coordinators from the Building and Neighborhood Services Department attended a homeowner's association meeting in the Ron Crutcher Estates Neighborhood to introduce a Voluntary Neighborhood Inspection Program. Ron Crutcher Estates was developed approximately six years ago by Habitat for Humanity of Williamson County and is comprised of twenty detached, single-family dwellings. Habitat was in the process of turning the responsibilities over to the HOA residents and invited us to pilot the program that had been shared earlier as a possible property maintenance tool with the Affordable/Workforce Housing Advisory Committee. As described in the attached pamphlet, the Resource Coordinators met with each of the property owners when they performed the initial complimentary inspections and maintained contact throughout the process until the observed violations were resolved. We are pleased to report the exterior of all the properties in the neighborhood were in compliance by the end of November. The Voluntary Neighborhood Inspection Program is available to any City neighborhood.

Financial Impact

Working cooperatively with neighborhood residents to ensure all properties within a defined area are similarly maintained creates a sense of pride among residents, is an efficient use of staff resources, and reduces the number of property maintenance complaints received by various City Departments.

Recommendation

This information is provided to the Board to show the impact of this pilot program that is now available to assist other neighborhoods throughout the community. Attached is:

- Voluntary Neighborhood Inspection Program Pamphlet
- Resident Congratulatory Compliance Letter

Exterior Neighborhood Inspection Program

The citizens of Franklin desire neighborhoods that are safe and well kept. However, some Franklin properties do fall into disrepair, creating a blighting influence on the entire neighborhood.

The City of Franklin has sought to preserve its neighborhoods through a Neighborhood Inspection Program which is administered by the Building and Neighborhood Services Department. The program ensures that the exteriors of Franklin's homes and commercial buildings, including yards and garages, meet basic criteria for upkeep.

How does the program work?

Step One:

The first step is to identify the areas that would benefit from a Neighborhood Inspection Program. The Building and Neighborhood Services Department encourages residents, homeowners associations, and other neighborhood organizations to request a Neighborhood Inspection Program in their neighborhood.

Department staff also considers areas that are undergoing various private and/or public revitalization efforts.

Step Two:

The Department prepares a plan that includes:

- Neighborhood Meeting
- Courtesy Inspection Process
- Follow-up Inspections
- Notice of Violations
- Appeals Procedure
- Municipal Citations

Step Three:

After Neighborhood Resource Coordinators, conduct a neighborhood meeting. The Coordinators will attempt to schedule the initial courtesy exterior inspection with each property owner so they can explain potential maintenance problems. If the owner is not available, the inspectors will still carry out their inspections and leave a copy of the courtesy inspection checklist at the property.

Step Four:

When an inspection reveals maintenance problems, a copy of the courtesy inspection checklist is left with the owner/occupant and a re-inspection date is noted. If the repair/corrections are not complete upon re-inspection, a formal *Notice of Violation* is issued.

Exceptions: Properties that have issues in need of immediate attention such as high weeds, unsafe buildings and/or health threatening conditions receive a formal *Notice of Violation*, immediately.

When are inspections conducted?

Neighborhood Resource Coordinators conduct their work for the Neighborhood Inspection Program between 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM, Monday – Friday. However, since success for the Neighborhood Inspection Program is predicated on resident participation, Coordinators will make accommodations to meet residents in the early evening or Saturday mornings.

Whom do I contact with questions on an Notice of Violation?

Contact the Neighborhood Resource Coordinator assigned to facilitate the program or the Coordinator whose name and telephone number appears on the inspection checklist. The Building and Neighborhood

Services Department telephone number is 615-794-7012. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

May I appeal a Notice of Violation?

Yes. Property owners may request an appeal through the Building and Neighborhood Services Department. All appeals are heard by the Building Standards Board of Appeals. To file an appeal, owners must visit the Department and provide the following:

1. Submit a written request for appeal within 20 days of receiving the *Notice of Violation*.
2. Provide a written statement supporting the appeal.

May I ask for an extension on a Notice of Violation?

Yes. Property owners may contact the Neighborhood Resource Coordinator to request an extension. The Coordinators makes decisions on extensions in accordance with its extension policy.

What happens if the property is not repaired?

After a courtesy inspection and inspection that involves a formal *Notice of Violation*, the Neighborhood Resource Coordinator may issue a municipal citation to the property owner for each violation. Once the City has issued a citation, the property owner must resolve the citation through Municipal Court, 109 3rd Avenue, S., Suite 120, Franklin, TN.

How can I find out which areas of the community have been selected for this program?

Contact the Neighborhood Resources Supervisor by phoning the Building and Neighborhood Services Department at (615) 790-7012.

Common Property Maintenance Violations:

- Building Exterior:**
- No street numbers
- Chipped and peeling paint
- Missing handrails and guardrail
- Deteriorated or broken porch steps
- Torn or missing screens
- Windows broken or in disrepair
- Damaged or missing storm doors
- Damaged siding
- Rotting/damaged soffit and fascia
- Damaged Masonry: foundations
- chimneys
- walls
- Gutters and downspouts missing or damaged
- Roof in need of repair or replacement

Yard Area:

- Weeds exceeding 12" in height
- No grass
- Junk and debris
- Cars parked on the lawn
- Driveways in disrepair
- Disabled/unlicensed vehicles

Accessory Structures:

- Chipped and peeling paint
- Overhead doors missing or damaged
- Service doors missing or damaged
- Broken windows

How can I find more information about this program?

For questions on property maintenance codes, building permits, and zoning, contact:

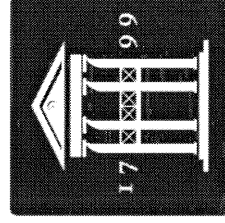
**City of Franklin
BUILDING AND NEIGHBORHOOD
SERVICES DEPARTMENT**
109 Third Avenue South Suite 110
Franklin, TN 37064
(615) 790-7012

Solid Waste Collection & Recycling:

For questions on bulk pick-up, yard waste and garbage collection contact the **City of Franklin Solid Waste Department at 615-794-1516.**

Leaf Collection Program:

For loose-leaf collection beginning October 1 thru February 1, contact the **City of Franklin Street Department at 615-791-3254.**



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City of Franklin



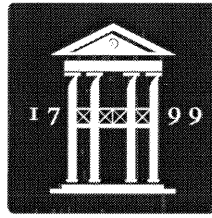
Voluntary Exterior Neighborhood Inspection Program

Promoting Property Maintenance and Improvements

City of Franklin Building and
Neighborhood Services Department
109 3rd Avenue South, Suite 110
Franklin, TN 37067
(615) 794-7012
www.franklintn.gov

CODES DEPARTMENT

Tom Marsh
Interim Director



John C. Schroer
Mayor of Franklin

Eric S. Stuckey
City Administrator

HISTORIC
FRANKLIN
TENNESSEE

December 16, 2009

Homeowner
c/o Westview/Ron Crutcher Estates
Homeowners Association
Franklin, TN 37064

Dear City of Franklin Resident and Homeowner,

Thank you for participating in our Exterior Neighborhood Inspection Program. After meeting with a small group of residents at your annual homeowner's association meeting, City of Franklin Neighborhood Resource Coordinators conducted an exterior property inspection with many of your neighbors present. Our Coordinators pointed out exterior property conditions that were in violation of minimum property maintenance standards and offered suggestions on making repairs. The Coordinators returned for a follow-up inspection and maintained contact with property owners until the violations were resolved. We are pleased that your entire neighborhood is in compliance and congratulate your spirit and cooperation.

We appreciate the opportunity to work with you and your neighbors in piloting this new Voluntary Exterior Neighborhood Inspection Program. As we continue to expand the program to larger neighborhoods, the experience we gained from our work with you will be very helpful in keeping Franklin a wonderful place to live.

Please remember that we are here to assist you with any of your future property maintenance or building projects.

Very sincerely,

Clay Matthews
Housing Development Coordinator
City of Franklin

c. Vernon J. Gerth, ACA-Community and Economic Development