

BILL NO. _____

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 7 OF THE MUNICIPAL CODE OF THE CITY OF CRESTWOOD, MISSOURI, TO ADD A NEW ARTICLE RELATING TO DANGEROUS BUILDINGS WITHIN THE CITY OF CRESTWOOD

WHEREAS, the Charter of the City of Crestwood (the “City”) provides that the City “shall have all powers the General Assembly of the State of Missouri has authority to confer upon any city,” except as limited by the U.S. and Missouri Constitutions, Missouri statutes and any limitations within the Charter itself; and

WHEREAS, §§ 67.400, RSMo, *et seq.*, authorizes the Board of Aldermen of the City to provide for vacation and the mandatory repair or demolition of buildings and structures which are detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of the residents and declared to be a public nuisance; and;

WHEREAS, the City is taking steps to ensure that property values within the City are protected and that the City remains a safe and attractive place in which to live and do business; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Aldermen finds and determines that it would be in the best interest of the City to enact regulations providing for the vacation, repair, and/or demolition of dangerous buildings within the City; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Aldermen finds that the proposed amendment to Chapter 7 of the Code would be in the best interest of the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF ALDERMEN OF THE CITY OF CRESTWOOD, MISSOURI, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1: Chapter 7 of the Municipal Code of the City of Crestwood, Missouri, pertaining to buildings and building regulations, is hereby amended by adding Article VIII, consisting of new sections to be numbered as Secs. 7-180, 7-181, 7-182, 7-183, 7-184, 7-185, 7-186, 7-187, 7-188, 7-189, 7-190, and 7-191, which read as follows:

Article VIII. Dangerous Buildings.

Sec. 7-180 Purpose and Scope.

It is the purpose of this Article to provide a just, equitable and practicable method for the repairing, vacation or demolition of buildings or structures that may endanger the life, limb, health, property, safety or welfare of the occupants of such buildings or the general public, and this Article shall apply to all dangerous buildings, as herein defined, that now are in existence or that may hereafter exist in the City of Crestwood, Missouri.

Sec. 7-181 Dangerous Buildings, Defined.

All buildings or structures that are detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of the residents of the City and that have any or all of the following defects shall be deemed "*dangerous buildings*":

- (a) Those with interior walls or other vertical structural members that list, lean or buckle to such an extent that a plumb line passing through the center of gravity falls outside the middle third of its base.
- (b) Those that, exclusive of the foundation, show thirty-three percent (33%) or more damage or deterioration of the supporting member or members, or fifty percent (50%) damage or deterioration of the non-supporting enclosing or outside walls or covering.
- (c) Those that have improperly distributed loads upon the floors or roofs, or in which the same are overloaded or that have insufficient strength to be reasonably safe for the purpose used.
- (d) Those that have been damaged by fire, wind or other causes so as to become dangerous to life, safety or the general health and welfare of the occupants or the people of the City.
- (e) Those that are so dilapidated, decayed, unsafe, unsanitary or that so utterly fail to provide the amenities essential to decent living that they are unfit for human habitation, or are likely to cause sickness or disease, so as to work injury to the health, safety or welfare of those occupying such building.
- (f) Those having light, air and sanitation facilities that are inadequate to protect the health, safety or general welfare of human beings who live or may live therein.
- (g) Those having inadequate facilities for egress in case of fire or panic or those having insufficient stairways, elevators, fire escapes or other adequate means of evacuation.

- (h) Those that have parts thereof that are so attached that they may fall and injure members of the public or property.
- (i) Those that because of their condition are unsafe, unsanitary or dangerous to the health, safety or general welfare of the people of this City.

Sec. 7-182 Dangerous Buildings Declared Public Nuisance.

All dangerous buildings or structures, as defined by Section 7-181 of this Article are hereby declared to be public nuisances, and shall be repaired, vacated or demolished as provided herein.

Sec. 7-183 Standards for Repair, Vacation, or Demolition.

The following standards shall be followed in substance by the Building Inspector(s) and the Building Commissioner, or board of appeals, in ordering repair, vacation or demolition of any dangerous building.

- (a) If the dangerous building can reasonably be repaired so that it no longer will exist in violation of the terms of this Article, it shall be ordered repaired.
- (b) If the dangerous building is in such condition as to make it dangerous to the health, safety, or general welfare of its occupants, it shall be ordered to be vacated and repaired.
- (c) In all cases where a building cannot be repaired so that it no longer will exist in violation of the terms of this Article, it shall be demolished.
- (d) In all cases where a dangerous building is a fire hazard existing or erected in violation of the terms of this Article or any ordinance of this City or statute of the State of Missouri, it shall be repaired or demolished.
- (e) If a building, or portion thereof, is contaminated due to methamphetamine production or use on the property, such contamination shall be abated in accordance with Section 7-171 of this Code.

Sec. 7-184 Building Inspector.

All code enforcement officers, fire officials, police officers, or employees of the Department of Public Services may be designated as Building Inspectors by the Building Commissioner for purposes of this Article. The Department of Public Services may also designate code enforcement officers of St. Louis County working with the City pursuant to a contract as Building Inspectors.

Sec. 7-185 Duties of Building Inspector – Procedure and Notice.

The Building Inspector(s) shall have the duty under this Article to:

- (a) Inspect, or cause to be inspected, as often as may be necessary, all residential, institutional, assembly, commercial, industrial, garage, special or miscellaneous occupancy buildings for the purpose of determining whether any conditions exist that render such place to be a dangerous building when he or she has reasonable grounds to believe that any such building is dangerous.

- (b) Inspect any building, wall or structure about which complaints are filed by any person to the effect that a building, wall, or structure is or may be existing in violation of this Article, and the Building Inspector determines that there are reasonable grounds to believe that such building is dangerous.
- (c) Inspect any building, wall or structure reported by the fire or police departments of this City as probably existing in violation of this Article.
- (d) Notify the owner, occupant, lessee, mortgagee, agent, and all other persons having an interest in the building or structure, as shown by the land records of the Recorder of Deeds of St. Louis County, of any building or structure found by him or her to be a dangerous building or structure within the standards set forth in Section 7-181. Such notice shall be in writing and shall be given either by personal service or by certified mail, return receipt requested, or if service cannot be had by either of these modes of service, then service may be had by publication in a newspaper qualified to publish legal notices for two (2) consecutive weeks.

The notice required shall state that:

- (1) The owner must vacate, vacate and repair, or vacate and demolish said building and clean up the lot or property on which the building is located in accordance with the terms of the notice and this Article;
 - (2) The occupant or lessee must vacate said building or have it repaired in accordance with the notice and remain in possession;
 - (3) The mortgagee, agent, or other persons having an interest in said building as shown by the land records of the Recorder of Deeds of St. Louis County may, at his/her own risk, repair, vacate, or demolish the building and clean up the property or have such work done; provided, that any person notified under this Subsection to repair, vacate or demolish any building or clean up the property shall be given such reasonable time, not exceeding thirty (30) days, to commence the required work.
- (e) The notice provided for in this Section shall state a description of the building or structure deemed dangerous, a statement of the particulars that make the building or structure a dangerous building, a statement indicating that as a dangerous building, said building or structure constitutes a nuisance, and an order requiring the designated work to be commenced within the time provided for in subsection (d)(3) of this Section.
 - (f) Report in writing to the Building Commissioner the non-compliance with any notice to vacate, repair, demolish, clean up the property or upon the failure to proceed continuously with the work without unnecessary delay.
 - (g) Appear at all hearings conducted by the Building Commissioner and testify as to the condition of dangerous buildings.
 - (h) Immediately report to the Building Commissioner concerning any building found by him or her to be inherently dangerous and that he or she determined to be a public nuisance. The Building Commissioner may direct that such building be marked or posted with a written notice reading substantially as follows:

“This building has been found to be a dangerous building by the Building Inspector. This notice is to remain on this building and/or property until it is repaired, vacated, or demolished and the property is cleaned up in

accordance with the notice that has been given the owner, occupant, lessee, mortgagee, or agent of this building, and all other persons having an interest in said building as shown by the land records of the Recorder of Deeds of St. Louis County. It is unlawful to remove this notice until such notice is complied with.”

Provided, however, that the order by the Building Commissioner and the posting of said notice, shall not be construed to deprive all persons entitled thereto by this Article to the notice and hearing prescribed herein.

Sec. 7-186 Building Commissioner.

The Director of Public Services, or his or her designee, shall act as Building Commissioner under this Article.

Sec. 7-187 Duties of the Building Commissioner.

The Building Commissioner shall have the powers and duties pursuant to this Article to:

- (a) Supervise all inspections required by this Article, and cause the Building Inspector to make inspections and perform all the duties required of him or her by this Article. Upon receiving a complaint or report from any source that a dangerous building exists in the City, the Building Commissioner shall cause an inspection to be made forthwith. If the Building Commissioner deems it necessary to the performance of his/her duties and responsibilities imposed herein, the Building Commissioner may request an inspection and report be made by any other City Department or retain services of an expert whenever the Building Commissioner deems such service necessary.
- (b) Upon receipt of a report from the Building Inspector indicating failure by the owner, lessee, occupant, mortgagee, agent, or other persons(s) having an interest in said building to commence work of reconditioning or demolition within the time specified by the notice, or upon failure to proceed continuously with work without unnecessary delay, or failure to complete the work in the time provided by the Building Inspector, hold a hearing giving the affected parties full and adequate hearing on the matter.
- (c) Give written notice of said hearing, either by personal service or by certified mail, return receipt requested, or if service cannot be had by either of those modes of service then, by publication in a newspaper qualified to publish legal notices, at least ten (10) days in advance of the hearing date, to the owner, occupant, mortgagee, lessee, agent, and all other persons having an interest in said building as shown by the land records of the Recorder of Deeds of St. Louis County, who may appear before the Building Commissioner on the date specified in the notice to show cause why the building or structure reported to be a dangerous building should not be repaired, vacated or demolished in accordance with the statement of particulars set forth in the Building Inspector’s notice as provided herein. Any party may be represented by counsel and all parties shall have an opportunity to be heard.

- (d) Make written findings of fact from the evidence offered at said hearing as to whether or not the building in question is a dangerous building within the terms of Section 7-181 of this Article.
- (e) If the evidence supports a finding based upon competent and substantial evidence that the building or structure is a dangerous building, and a nuisance and detrimental to the health, safety, or welfare of the residents of the City, the Building Commissioner shall issue an order based upon its findings of fact commanding the owner, occupant, mortgagee, lessee, agent, or other persons(s) having an interest in said building as shown by the land records of the Recorder of Deeds of St. Louis County to repair, vacate or demolish any building found to be a dangerous building and to clean up the property, provided that any person so notified, shall have the privilege of either repairing or vacating and repairing said building, if such repair will comply with the ordinances of this City, or may vacate and demolish said dangerous building at his or her own risk to prevent the acquiring by the City of the lien against the land where the dangerous building stands. If the evidence does not support a finding that a building or structure is a dangerous building, or a nuisance or detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of the residents of the City, no order shall be issued.
- (f) If the owner, occupant, mortgagee or lessee fails to comply with the order within thirty (30) days, the Building Commissioner shall cause such building or structure to be repaired, vacated, or demolished and the property cleaned up as the facts may warrant. The Building Commissioner shall certify the cost of performance to the City Clerk, who shall cause a special tax bill or assessment therefor against the property to be prepared and collected in the manner provided by law. If the Building Commissioner provides in his or her order for the building or structure to be demolished, secured, or repaired, such contractor may file a mechanic's lien and enforce same in accordance with Sections 429.010 to 429.360, RSMo. Except as provided in Section 7-188, at the request of the taxpayer, the special tax bill may be paid in installments over a period of not more than ten (10) years. Said tax bill or assessment shall bear interest at a rate of eight percent (8%) per annum until paid. Said tax bill from the date of its issuance shall be deemed a personal debt against the property owner and shall also be a lien on the property until paid.

Sec. 7-188 Insurance Proceeds, How Handled.

- (a) If there are proceeds of any insurance policy based upon a covered claim payment made for damage or loss to a building or other structure caused by or arising out of any fire, explosion or other casualty loss, the following procedure is established for the payment of up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the insurance proceeds to the City, as set forth in this Section. This Section shall apply only to a covered claim payment that is in excess of fifty percent (50%) of the face value of the policy covering a building or other structure:
 - (1) The insurer shall withhold from the covered claim payment up to twenty-five percent (25%) of the covered claim payment, and shall pay such monies to the City to deposit into an interest-bearing account. Any named

mortgagee on the insurance policy shall maintain priority over any obligation under this Article.

- (2) The City shall release the proceeds and any interest that has accrued on such proceeds received under subsection (a)(1) of this Section to the insured or as the terms of the policy and endorsements thereto provide within thirty (30) days after receipt of such insurance monies, unless the City has instituted legal proceedings under the provisions of subsection (f) of Section 7-187. If the City has proceeded under the provisions of subsection (f) of Section 7-187, all monies in excess of that necessary to comply with the provisions of Subsection (f) of Section 7-187 for the removal, securing, repair and cleanup of the building or structure and the lot on which it is located, less salvage value, shall be paid to the insured.
- (b) If there are no proceeds of any insurance policy as set forth in subsection (a) of this Section, at the request of the taxpayer, the tax bill may be paid in installments over a period of not more than ten (10) years. The tax bill from the date of its issuance shall be a lien on the property and a personal debt against the property owner(s) until paid.
- (c) This Section shall apply to fire, explosion or other casualty loss claims arising on all buildings and structures.
- (d) This Section does not make the City a party to any insurance contract, and the insurer is not liable to any party for any amount in excess of the proceeds otherwise payable under its insurance policy.
- (e) The Building Commissioner may certify that in lieu of payment of all or part of the covered claim payment under subsection (a) of this Section that it has obtained satisfactory proof that the insured has removed or will remove the debris and repair, rebuild or otherwise make the premises safe and secure. In this event, the Building Commissioner shall issue a certificate within thirty (30) days after receipt of proof to permit covered claim payment to the insured without the deduction pursuant to subsection (a) of this Section. It shall be the obligation of the insured or other person making the claim to provide the insurance company with the written certificate provided for in this Subsection.

Sec. 7-189 Appeal.

Any owner, occupant, lessee, mortgagee, agent or any other person(s) having an interest in a dangerous building as shown by the land records of the Recorder of Deeds of St. Louis County, may appeal such decision to the Circuit Court of St. Louis County, as provided for in Sections 536.100 to 536.140, RSMo., if a proper record as defined in Section 536.130, RSMo., is maintained of the hearing provided for in Section 7-187 hereof. Otherwise, the appeal shall be made pursuant to the procedures provided for in Section 536.150, RSMo.

Sec. 7-190 Emergencies.

In cases where it reasonably appears that there is immediate danger to the health, life, safety or welfare of any person unless a dangerous building, as defined herein, is immediately repaired, vacated, or demolished and the property is cleaned up, the Building Inspector

shall report such facts to the Building Commissioner and the Building Commissioner may cause the immediate repair, vacation, or demolition of such dangerous building. The costs of such emergency repair, vacation, or demolition of such dangerous building shall be collected in the same manner as provided in Sections 7-187 and 7-188.

Sec. 7-191 Violations, Disregarding Notices or Orders.

The owner, occupant or lessee in possession of any dangerous building who shall fail to comply with the order to repair, vacate, or demolish said building given by the Building Commissioner or who shall fail to proceed continuously without unnecessary delay; and any person removing any notices provided for in this Article; and any person violating any other provisions of this Article shall be guilty of an offense and upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not more than five hundred dollars (\$500.00). Each day that a person fails to comply with an order of the Building Commissioner shall be deemed a separate offense.

SECTION 2: The remaining provisions of Chapter 7 of the City’s Code shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 3: In accordance with § 67.412, RSMo, the City Clerk shall provide a copy of this Ordinance to the Director of the Missouri Department of Insurance, Financial Institutions and Professional Registration within fourteen (14) days after the adoption of this Ordinance.

SECTION 4: This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage by the Board of Aldermen and its approval by the Mayor.

PASSED AND SIGNED this _____ day of _____, 2019.

Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2019.

Mayor