



AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY FORM

MEETING DATE: February 22, 2022

PREPARED BY: Lindsay Koskiniemi, CPM, CGFO, Assistant Director of Development Services

AGENDA CONTENT: Update on the substandard building initiative and briefing on process to declare substandard building

AGENDA ITEM SECTION: Regular Agenda

BUDGETED AMOUNT: \$45,740 **FUNDS REQUESTED:** None currently

FUND: 01-535-465 – General Fund – Development Services – Demolition

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

UPDATE ON SUBSTANDARD BUILDING INITIATIVE

In January 2021, City of Angleton Department of Development Services launched a city-wide substandard building initiative to identify residential structures deemed to be substandard. Criteria used to gauge a designation of “substandard” included the estimated cost to bring the property to Code compliance meeting or exceeding fifty percent (50%) of the value of the property, advanced degradation and decay of the structure, availability of water, and overall fitness for human habitation.

Staff determined over 60 houses throughout the city were substandard and began the enforcement process by making initial contact with property owners. Correspondence with property owners of substandard structures has been in progress for one year with some efforts rendering success. Since the initiative was launched, city staff have corresponded with property owners and been successful in having property owners voluntarily demolish over 25 substandard structures. In some cases, staff has been unable to reach property owners, therefore additional effort is needed to demolish unsafe structures that pose a threat to public safety.

Communication efforts with property owners have been carefully documented. Staff have worked to compare substandard structures and create a demolition priority list to begin the demolition process following all statutory and local requirements. Criteria staff used to determine demolition priority was based on the structures believed to pose the greatest threat to community health and safety, visibility, whether property is occupied, and degree of advanced damage. While dozens of substandard structures remain after 2021 enforcement initiation, City Council approved \$45,740 for demolition in the FY 2021 – 2022 budget.

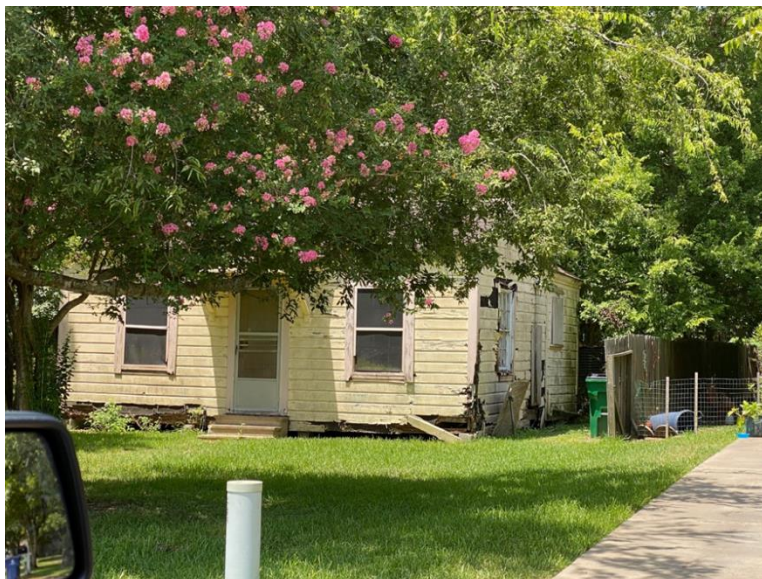
Demolition costs are largely dependent on materials, square footage, hauling and disposal of materials, and whether a concrete slab is removed. City staff believes, based on quotes received for demolition of comparable properties from local construction companies, the cost to demolish a substandard home less than 1500 square feet will typically cost \$7,000. Using that estimate, staff believes 6 demolitions can be achieved in this fiscal year.

Using the criteria to prioritize properties most eligible for demolition, staff has identified the following substandard properties to request City Council's authorization to hold future public hearings to declare condemned to begin the process of demolition in Fiscal Year 2021 - 2022:

- 612 S. Hancock – single family house
- 316 Rogers Street – single family house
- 320 W. Peach Street – single family house
- 504 Farrer Street – single family house
- 520 Dwyer – detached two-car garage

STATUS OF IDENTIFIED PROPERTIES

612 S. Hancock – Siding is rotted with inside exposed, and house is leaning and appears to be structurally unsound. This property is in the Viola K. Scott Estate. Letters were sent on February 11, 2021 via regular and certified mail. Code Enforcement sent written warning on May 28, 2021. A total of 4 citations have been sent as of December 13, 2021. House is unoccupied.



316 Rogers Street – Windows are broken. Siding and piers appear to be rotted, and inside of house is visible through holes in siding. Roof and eaves appear to be rotted. Code Enforcement has sent property owner letters via certified and regular mail. Warning letter mailed via certified and regular mail, and citations issued for junk vehicles and substandard dwelling. House is believed to be unoccupied currently. **Staff wishes to move forward with condemnation hearing.**



320 W. Peach Street – The roof is caved in, house leaning, broken windows, and extensive damage to interior due to water intrusion through failed roof. Notice of substandard condition and Code violations sent to property owner via regular and certified mail on February 8, 2021. While Code Enforcement officers have made contact with property owner, no progress has been made to improve the condition of the home over the past year. House is unoccupied. **Staff wishes to move forward with condemnation hearing.**



504 Farrer Street – This property poses the greatest threat to public safety, as the house is completely separated in the back with the interior of the home completely exposed and the collapsed portion decayed on the ground. No property maintenance has been done, and the trees have large dead limbs that fall. Upon a routine field inspection in January 2022, staff found evidence of vagrants occupying the house. The following actions have been taken by staff to notify the nonresponsive property owner. The City has received several complaints of rodents and insects at this property and has issued at least 14 liens since 2018 for mowing the property. Staff has collaborated with the City's Legal Counsel and wishes to initiate court proceedings to establish substandard conditions and violations of the City's Code of Ordinances. Home is unoccupied by resident but may be periodically occupied by vagrants without property owner's permission.

- July 2017: Certified letter sent to property owner notifying of dilapidated structure.
- May 5, 2020: Certified letter sent to property owner – complaint of dilapidated structure.
- May 18, 2020: Certified letter sent to property owner – complaint of dilapidated structure.

- January 13, 2021: Certified letter sent to property owner – complaint of dilapidated structure.
- April 2021: Citations mailed to property owner.





Missing front doorknob. Upon a closer look, staff noticed there were food bags, cups, and a plastic wrapped piece of insulation likely used as a floor pallet for resting. These observations are indicative of vagrant habitation.





520 Dwyer Street – The subject property is an approximate 1,000 square foot, two car detached garage structure that is completely collapsed. Upon investigating a complaint of rodents, overgrown foliage, and dilapidates structure, staff made contact with property owner, who expressed circumstances that staff believe are appropriate to merit City action. Staff has worked with Legal to prepare an agreement with the property owner to demolish and clear the collapsed garage with a lien for the cost of fees incurred by the City applied to the property with the property owner's request and consent. The cost for the demolition will be \$3,400.



NEXT STEPS

City staff has worked in tandem with Legal to understand property owner rights, the City's authority to declare a house substandard and the process by which to demolish a substandard structure.

City staff have worked diligently with property owners to assist bringing properties into compliance with the City's Code as well as empathetically aid responsive property owners who have communicated their intended timeline to remediate deficiencies based on personal circumstances, such as availability of resources, time, financial situation, etc.

Next, staff members will present ordinances for each property and request public hearings to declare substandard properties condemned. Consistent with the requirements of Local Government Code Chapter 214, the City will allow property owners thirty (30) days to respond. If no response is received by the City, the City may continue with enforcement action up to and including demolition.

RECOMMENDATION

This update is provided to the City Council for information purposes only, and no recommendation is needed at this time.