

Vacant Building Registration

Item: To require owners of vacant properties to pay a registration fee.

Discussion:

1. Derelict vacant buildings make the Town appear run down and unwelcoming.
2. Requiring owners of vacant and derelict buildings to pay a yearly registration fee will discourage the owner from allowing the property to fall into disrepair and encourage the owners to find a suitable tenant for the property.
3. A yearly registration fee has been successful in other areas of Virginia in reducing vacant and blighted buildings on Main Street.

Recommendation:

1. Town Council approve as a first reading the following addition to the Town Ordinance:

Article F – Vacant Building Registration; civil penalty

§ 6-4-51 – Vacant Building Registration; civil penalty

In accordance with Section 15.2-1127 of the Code of Virginia as amended; owners of buildings that have been vacant for a continuous period of 12 months or more, and which meet the definition of derelict building, to register such buildings on an annual basis and may impose an annual registration fee not to exceed \$100.00 to defray the cost of processing such registration. The registration of buildings shall be on forms designated by the locality and filed with the Town Office. Failure to register shall be a \$200.00 civil penalty; however, failure to register in conservation and rehabilitation districts designated by the governing body, or in other areas designated as blighted, shall be punishable by a civil penalty not exceeding \$400.00. Notice shall be mailed to the owner or owners, at the address which property tax notices are sent, at least 30 days prior to the assessment of the civil penalty.