



Councillor Paul Ainslie
Toronto City Council
Scarborough East - Ward 43

Chair, Scarborough Community Council
Chair, Government Management Committee
Chair, Toronto Public Library Board

Date: February 9, 2012
To: Councillor Cesar Palacio, Chair and Member of the Licensing and Standards Committee
From: Councillor Paul Ainslie
Re: Introduction of Vacant and Derelict Buildings By-law

Vacant buildings in the City of Toronto, particularly those with storefronts are contributing to the dilapidation of neighbourhoods. Thriving communities with an abundance of residents, and business' who are working hard to keep their doors open to customers are being affected.

Operating a business particularly a storefront is difficult when the buildings surrounding you are not well maintained or empty for long periods of time. It would be beneficial for business' and residential communities if the City of Toronto introduced a vacant and derelict buildings by-law similar to the one introduced in the City of Winnipeg. Making property owners accountable to the surrounding communities affected by their vacant / derelict building, particularly storefront establishments. The City of Winnipeg has phrased: *The Vacant Buildings Program targets vacant buildings that are dilapidated, dangerous, improperly secured, subject to public complaints, and that have been vacant for extended periods of time.* www.winnipeg.ca/cms/bylawenforcement/vacantbuildings.stm.

The by-law lists "How to Avoid/Reduce Inspection and Boarded Building Permit Fees";

- Don't leave a building vacant for an extended period of time.
- If a building is maintained and occupied, there will be no vacant building inspection, occupancy certificate, or Boarded Building Permits fees.
- (Vacant and dilapidated buildings are subject to community complaints forwarded to the City.)

In the City of Toronto, instead of encouraging property owners to lease their buildings the City of Toronto is offering landlords with empty buildings tax rebate of 30% for space that has been vacant for 90 days or more, rewarding the property owners to keep their building empty.

Recommendations:

1. The Licensing and Standards Committee direct the Executive Director, Municipal Licensing and Standards, and other relevant City staff, to report back to the committee on the possibility of the introducing a "Vacant and Derelict Buildings" By-law within the City of Toronto, to address the increasing number of empty buildings across the City.

Sincerely,

Councillor Paul Ainslie
City of Toronto, Scarborough East Ward 43

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