

From: Renee Aspinwall [mailto:aspinwallrenee@gmail.com]  
Sent: Thursday, May 28, 2015 3:46 PM  
To: Carol Duncan  
Subject: Ordinance

I am in favor of the city ordinance that will be presented, Tuesday. As a Realtor, I see that it will help everyone with their property value and eliminate some 3rd party requirement that must be meant in order for the buyer to get a particular loan.

Respectfully,  
Renee Aspinwall, Realtor  
Sent from my iPhone  
Renee Aspinwall  
Jonesboro Realty Company

**From:** Jeb Spencer [<mailto:jeb.spencer@yahoo.com>]

**Sent:** Monday, October 05, 2015 12:36 PM

**To:** Charles Frierson; Gene Vance; [tdburton10@yahoo.com](mailto:tdburton10@yahoo.com); Charles Coleman; Darrel Dover; Chris Gibson; Donna Jackson; Mitch Johnson; Tim McCall; [chrismooreplumbing@yahoo.com](mailto:chrismooreplumbing@yahoo.com); John Street; Gene Vance; Ann Williams; Rennell Woods Contact; Harold Perrin

**Subject:** Maintenance code

Dear council members:

I hope you will support the proposed maintenance code. Most people take reasonable care of their property, but the few that don't make a huge impact on the appearance and value of the city. According to a government website, an abandoned, neglected house lowers adjacent property values by an average of 15%. One of these houses on a corner lot may be directly impacting eight other houses which are in direct view of it!

At least thirteen Arkansas cities have adopted some kind of property maintenance code whether it is the International Property Maintenance Code, or a derivative of it. These cities are Bentonville, Fort Smith, Little Rock, North Little Rock, Lowell, Morrilton, Cherokee Village, Pine Bluff, Texarkana, Russellville, White Hall and Clarksville. Perhaps you know some of the leaders in these communities and can ask them personally how the maintenance code has affected their cities. I read testimonials online about how neighborhoods in Cherokee Village were vastly improved by a fairly administered code.

I understand that right of entry can be a sticking point, but I think it's pretty clear that no code officials can enter a building without permission unless they obtain a warrant. I would love learn how the codes are working in those other cities. My guess is that property values are going up and the rights of many innocent tenants and property owners are being protected at the expense of a very few irresponsible property owners.

I'm also concerned about the irreplaceable architecture we may continue to lose because of eventual condemnation of older houses. I realize that concern doesn't affect the daily lives of most citizens, but as city leaders I hope you'll adopt a code to help protect some of those buildings. Imagine our world if leaders of the past had not cared about buildings and institutions that would outlast their own lives and interests! I know a few of you share this concern with me, and I hope we all feel the same way.

The next generation of "movers and shakers" are driven by a quest for quality of life as much as a desire for economic success. Everywhere people are returning to, or seeking out, cities and neighborhoods that offer attractive surroundings, green space and parks, walkability, and cultural events **in addition to** jobs and economic opportunities.

Sadly, there are quality people who will not choose Jonesboro, and quality people who will leave Jonesboro if we don't do something to halt and reverse the creeping structural blight. The blight is most noticeable in our older neighborhoods at the moment, but it will spread. Many of the older houses are very tough and have endured generations of neglect. The newer neighborhoods may not hold up as long due to the less durable materials being used. The older houses are particularly important at the moment too because they are located in traditional neighborhoods that have sidewalks and are near parks and the downtowns that represent the quality of life those new movers and shakers are seeking. And, the buildings are truly irreplaceable. The materials and techniques and craftsmen are gone. The craftsmen and techniques will return eventually, but the old growth timber will not.

On a final note, I wonder if it's wise to make the enforcement of the code strictly complaint driven. While it sounds reasonable on first hearing, it could lead to unfair and random application of the code. The code enforcement officers could be overwhelmed with relatively minor complaints and become too distracted to address really critical maintenance issues that may not be generating complaints for some reason. Perhaps the public would be better served by simple standards applied equally by an impartial code officer.

I believe a maintenance code that treats all fairly and equally, is similar to the many that already are being used in the state, and helps save some of our precious buildings and traditional neighborhoods is one of the most important and lasting legacies you can leave as council members. It's critical to get this done as soon as possible because it will take some time for the positive effects to be realized. Some people are

understandably alarmed by changes, and in extreme cases there is room for abuse of a code. But it seems critical to me that we do something to avoid the economic costs to the city of allowing buildings to deteriorate to the point of condemnation. I assume that people who don't like new laws don't like old ones either, but we must have them in order to live together.

Thanks for your service, and for taking time to listen to my input.

Jeb Spencer  
615 W Matthews  
Builder, Restorer, West End Association member, Landlord's Association member.