

RESOLUTION NO. 810-2020, ESTABLISHING A TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS THE ZOMBIE HOME CRISIS IN SUFFOLK COUNTY

WHEREAS, zombie homes are vacant residential properties which have become dilapidated due to a lack of care and upkeep; and

WHEREAS, over the past 15 years, the number of zombie homes in Suffolk County has increased precipitously due to the financial crisis of 2008 and Hurricanes Irene and Sandy in 2011 and 2012; and

WHEREAS, zombie homes are a burden on the County, leading to increased costs associated with repair or remediation and reducing prospective homeowner interest in neighborhoods with such properties; and

WHEREAS, zombie homes can attract squatters, which creates additional barriers to developing a strong sense of community in areas with a large number of vacant properties present; and

WHEREAS, a task force should be established to address the zombie home crisis and make recommendations on how to address the number of zombie homes in communities throughout Suffolk County; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, that the Zombie Home Evaluation Task Force (“Task Force”) is hereby established to assess the zombie home crisis in Suffolk County and to develop various strategies for reducing the number of zombie homes, increasing community revitalization, and promoting homeownership; and be it further

2nd RESOLVED, that the Task Force shall consist of the following twenty-five (25) members:

- 1) The Majority Leader of the County Legislature, or his or her designee;
- 2) The Minority Leader of the County Legislature, or his or her designee;
- 3) The County Executive, or his or her designee;
- 4) The Commissioner of the Department of Economic Development and Planning, or his or her designee;
- 5) The Suffolk County Comptroller, or his or her designee;
- 6) The Suffolk County Clerk, or his or her designee;
- 7) The Director of the Suffolk County Division of Real Property Acquisition and Management in the Department of Economic Development and Planning, or his or her designee;
- 8) A representative of the Suffolk County Landbank Corporation;

- 9) A representative of the Long Island Housing Partnership;
- 10) A representative of Habitat for Humanity of Suffolk;
- 11) One representative from each town located in Suffolk County, to be appointed by their respective Town Supervisor;
- 12) A representative from the banking industry, to be appointed by the County Legislature;
- 13) A representative from the Community Development Corporation of Long Island;
- 14) A representative from the Long Island Board of Realtors;
- 15) The Executive Director of the Suffolk County Department of Minority Affairs, or his or her designee; and
- 16) A representative from the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency;

and be it further

3rd **RESOLVED**, that the chairperson of the Task Force shall be selected by a majority of the membership of the Task Force; and be it further

4th **RESOLVED**, that that the Task Force shall hold its first meeting on March 1, 2021, which meeting shall be convened by the Chair, for the purpose of organization, and the selection of a vice chairperson and a secretary; and be it further

5th **RESOLVED**, that the members of said Task Force shall serve without compensation and shall serve at the pleasure of their respective appointing authorities; and be it further

6th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force shall hold regular meetings, keep a record of all its proceedings, and determine the rules of its own proceedings with special meetings to be called by the chairperson upon his or her own initiative or upon receipt of a written request therefor signed by at least three (3) members of the Task Force. Written notice of the time and place of such special meetings shall be given by the secretary to each member at least four (4) days before the date fixed by the notice for such special meeting; and be it further

7th **RESOLVED**, that thirteen (13) members of the Task Force shall constitute a quorum to transact the business of the Task Force at both regular and special meetings; and be it further

8th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force may conduct such informal hearings and meetings at any place or places within the County of Suffolk for the purpose of obtaining necessary information or other data to assist it in the proper performance of its duties and functions as it deems necessary; and be it further

9th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force may delegate to any member of the Task Force the power and authority to conduct such hearings and meetings; and be it further

10th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force shall cooperate with the Legislative Committees of the County Legislature and make available to each Committee's use, upon request, any records and other data it may accumulate or obtain; and be it further

11th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force is hereby authorized, empowered, and directed to hold at least two (2) public hearings throughout the County of Suffolk to assemble the data and information necessary to complete the valuation, study, and report required with all reasonable efforts to be made to ascertain the experiences and opinions of the residents of Suffolk County; and be it further

12th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force shall be charged with examining and evaluating the zombie home crisis in Suffolk County, identifying communities with large proportions of zombie homes, and developing recommendations and strategies to reduce the number of zombie homes, promote homeownership, and increase community revitalization. Recommendations may include changes to state, county, or local laws and policies to decrease the number of zombie homes in Suffolk County now and in the future; and be it further

13th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force shall issue a report containing their findings and recommendations. The report shall also contain recommendations on how Suffolk County can increase community revitalization efforts and promote homeownership in areas that have been blighted by the zombie home crisis; and be it further

14th **RESOLVED**, that a written report of the findings and recommendations of the Task Force shall be provided to the County Executive, Clerk of the Legislature and each member of the County Legislature within 180 days from the initial meeting of the Task Force; and be it further

15th **RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall take effect immediately; and be it further

16th **RESOLVED**, that this Legislature, being the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) lead agency, hereby finds and determines that this resolution constitutes a Type II action pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(26) and (33) of Title 6 of the NEW YORK CODE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS (6 NYCRR) and within the meaning of Section 8-0109(2) of the NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW insofar as these actions constitute routine or continuing administration and management not including new programs or major reordering of priorities that may affect the environment, and the Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is hereby directed to circulate any appropriate SEQRA notices of determination of non-applicability or non-significance in accordance with this resolution.

DATED: November 16, 2020

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Steven Bellone
County Executive of Suffolk County

Date: November 30, 2020