

PROCESS OF DEMOLITION BY NEGLIGENCE (PROPOSED)

- 1- Code Enforcement and Historic preservation Commissioners notice a property in distress
- 2- Code Enforcement issues violations and fines for lack of maintenance
- 3- If nothing is done to fix / repair the structure within 1 month of violation (fines are to be paid within 30 days), the property's condition is documented in relation to the 6 criteria listed above, and is then placed on the list of "Properties of Concern".

Demolition by Neglect:

- The text of Criteria to make a property eligible to be placed on the list of properties of concern / demolition by neglect is confirmed and **approved with clarification below** (highlighted).
 - 1. Facades which may fall and injure members of the public or property.
 - 2. Deteriorated or inadequate foundation, defective or deteriorated flooring or floor supports, deteriorated walls or other vertical structural supports.
 - 3. Members of ceilings, roofs, ceiling and roof supports, or chimneys and other horizontal members which sag, split or buckle due to defective material or deterioration.
 - 4. Deteriorated or ineffective waterproofing of exterior walls, roofs, foundations or floors, including broken windows or doors.
 - 5. Defective or insufficient weather protection for exterior wall covering, including lack of paint or weathering due to lack of paint or other protective covering.
 - 6. Any fault or defect in the building which renders it not properly watertight or structurally unsafe."
- 4- The owner is notified of that status, and is given 90 days to remedy /fix / repair the structure
 - 5- At the end of 90 days, if no remedial action has been taken, the property is placed on the list of "Demolition by Neglect" properties, where legal action can be undertaken
 - 6- The owner of a property on the list of Demolition by Neglect is given a final 90 days to remedy /fix / repair the structure.
 - 7- At the end of the 90 days, if no action has been taken, the property owner is notified that the deteriorated structure becomes candidate for receivership by the city of Cambridge

Real Property

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Assessment Appeal Process

While we strive to provide the most accurate assessments possible, Customers sometimes feel that the Department's estimate of their property value is incorrect. The assessment appeal process allows property owners the opportunity to dispute the value determined by the Department. Property values rise and fall to reflect the market. Customers should file an appeal when the estimated value of their property does not accurately reflect what they believe to be its current market value.

Appeals may be filed on three occasions:

1. upon receipt of an assessment notice;
2. by a petition for review; and
3. upon purchase of property between January 1 and June 30.

There are three options for an appeal:

The information on the property worksheet will be reviewed at the time of the hearing to assure its accuracy. The Area Sales Listing is provided to you by the Department for assistance in estimating the market value of your property.

Customers may also obtain sales data from other sources. Other sources may include; searching sales through our Online Real Property Search (provide link for Real Property Search), utilizing other sales publications, or real estate professionals in your area. For a nominal fee, property worksheets of comparable properties may be obtained from your local assessment office.

To be most effective, you should:

- Focus on those points that affect the value of your property.
- Indicate why the Total New Market Value does not reflect the market value of the property.
- Identify any mathematical errors on the property worksheet or inaccurate information describing the characteristics of the property (such as the number of bathrooms, fireplaces, etc.).
- Provide sales of comparable properties which support your findings as to the value of the property.
- Avoid the following issues since they are not relevant to the value under appeal: comparison to past values, percent of increase, additional metropolitan costs, the amount of the tax bill, and services rendered or not rendered.

SECOND STEP - PROPERTY TAX ASSESSMENT APPEAL BOARD

Following the Supervisor's Level hearing, you will receive a final notice. If you disagree with the decision, you can appeal to the next step which is to the **Property Tax Assessment Appeals Board** (PTAAB). This appeal must be filed within 30 days from the date of the final notice you received as a result of the Supervisor's Level hearing.

PTAAB boards are located in each of the 24 jurisdictions. These boards are comprised of local residents of the jurisdiction who are recommended by the local government and appointed by the Governor. They are a separate and independent body from the Department. Customers generally need no assistance at this step, no fees are required, and they are free to present any supporting evidence, regardless of what was presented at the previous level appeal.

Hearing dates and times are determined by the members of PTAAB. If the hearing date conflicts with your schedule, the hearing may be postponed by contacting the local PTAAB clerk. However, no more than two postponements are granted at this level. You may elect to appeal in person or in writing.

Our Department provides a complementary property worksheet and a list of the comparable properties that will be used by the Department to support the Market Value of the property going before PTAAB. For more information regarding the Property Tax Assessment Appeals Board, please refer to their website www.ptaab.state.md.us.

THIRD STEP - MARYLAND TAX COURT

If you are dissatisfied with the decision made by the Property Tax Assessment Appeals Board, you have the option to file an appeal to the Maryland Tax Court (MTC) within 30 days of the date of the PTAAB order. The Maryland Tax Court is an independent body appointed by the Governor. Although the proceedings are more formal than the first two levels, it is still considered to be an informal administrative hearing. You must be present at the Maryland Tax Court appeal (no written hearings). There are no fees for filing an appeal to this level; hearings at this level are de novo, meaning nothing prior is considered.

The Hearing date, time, and location are determined by the Clerk to the Maryland Tax Court. Requests for continuance (postponements of hearing date) must be made to their office and are reviewed through that body.

At this level, our Department may undertake a more formal appraisal of your property. The Petitioner and Respondent are to comply with Maryland Tax Court RULE 7 (Notice of Reliance on Other Properties – Service of List – 10 days), mandating an exchange of information for any property to be offered as evidence other than the subject of the appeal.

Cambridge High School students are walking the walk

On Saturday December 7, 2019, the first two students from the Dorchester Career & Technology Center (DCTC), under a new program of collaboration between city and school system, started the survey of the city's sidewalks, verifying their compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Design Standards for Accessibility from the Department of Justice.

Amanda Bair and Aamna Alvi are shown here documenting a significant uplift and settlement of a sidewalk slab, which would constitute an obstruction to the path and access of a person with disabilities. They were accompanied and monitored by two members of the Cambridge ADA Committee, Patty Kaczmarek and Tom Puglisi, there to provide safety, but also additional training and information when required.



The students are using a Geographic Information Systems app developed by city employee Scott Shores. The Geographic Information Systems (also known as GIS) is a software program widely used in various practical business data analysis applications. Education about the issues facing people with disabilities, as well as the use of technology such as GIS, provide the students with both a window into their future as members of society and valuable training as young professionals.

Nine DCTC students are currently enrolled in this program, a partnership between the City of Cambridge and Dorchester County Public Schools (DCPS). Superintendent Dave Bromwell, and city employee Herve Hamon, together with Commissioner Dave Cannon and ADA Committee Chair Jerry Burroughs, struck an agreement that formalizes the hours needed to survey the entire city and give the enrolled students credit in the form of Community Service Hours, necessary for their graduation.

This endeavor is expected to be completed by the students in May 2020 and will lead to a full report on the status of Cambridge sidewalks. That report will in turn be presented to the City Council and become the basis to apply for State funding for infrastructure and street improvements.

TENANTS' RIGHTS LEASE ADDENDUM

In Maryland, the Landlord/Tenant relationship is governed by Title 8 of the Real Property Article. Title 8 may be accessed online by using the following link:

<http://www.michie.com/maryland/lpext.dll?f=templates&fn=main-h.htm&cp=mdcode>

Landlord Retaliation Prohibited

In Maryland, a landlord may not retaliate against a renter because the renter exercised his or her rights under the law or a lease. In other words, a landlord may not evict or threaten to evict a renter, increase the rent, decrease services, or terminate a month-to-month lease, because the renter did one of the following:

- 1) complained about unsafe housing conditions;
- 2) participated in a tenants' association; or
- 3) participated in a lawsuit against the landlord.

If tenants believe that the landlord is retaliating against them or threatening to retaliate against them, they should seek legal advice. The agencies listed below offer legal advice and information.

Consumer Protection Division of the Maryland Attorney General's Office:

<http://www.oag.state.md.us/Consumer/landlords.htm>

Or, you may contact the Consumer Protection Division's Lower Eastern Shore Office at 201 Baptist Street, Salisbury, Maryland 21801, 410-713-3620.

A joint project sponsored by Baltimore Neighborhoods Inc., and the Legal Aid Bureau that describes the tenants' rights in language non-attorneys may understand:

<http://www.peoples-law.org/housing/ltenant/lt.html>

My signature below indicates that I received a copy of the Tenants' Rights Lease Addendum upon signing the lease for the property located at _____.

Tenant's Signature Date

Tenant's Signature Date

Tenant's Signature Date

Tenant's Signature Date

Property Owner or Designated Agent's Signature Date

Please be advised that the City of Cambridge, MD or your landlord is not giving legal advice by requiring this document as a lease addendum. This is for informational purposes only.



PROPERTY MAINTNENACE IN THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

KNOW YOUR CITY'S CODES!

(Examples but Not Limited To)

1. Keep the exterior of your structure in good repair. Report and remove graffiti. Also keep exterior free of any mildew/oxidation.
2. Be sure your address number is clear so emergency personnel can find you if necessary.
3. Mow your lawn on a regular basis. **Don't** allow your grass to exceed 6" or more. Keep your property free of trash and debris. **Don't** park vehicles on the grass.
4. Place trash (Chesapeake Waste tote) by the curb after 5 p.m. on the evening before pickup and remove after 9 a.m. day following schedule collection.
5. Know your lot line boundaries and City's fence regulations. City permits may be required.
6. **Don't** park or store commercial or inoperable vehicles on your property. **Don't** conduct vehicle repair work on your property or roadways.
7. When parking, **do not** block the public sidewalk.
8. Keep your music or other noise from disturbing your neighbors.
9. Clean up after your pets such as dogs or cats. **Don't** allow pets to roam loose (especially chickens) or bark excessively.
10. Keep tree branches and shrubbery trimmed.
11. Clear your sidewalk of snow and ice 36 hours after snow has ended.
12. Check if building permits are required for remodeling and construction.
13. Be sure you have current and working smoke detectors. (10-year lithium battery smoke detector). **This is a Maryland State Law.**



CAMBRIDGE

Maryland

City of Cambridge
Department of Public Works - Building Safety Services
Code Enforcement Division

Did you know these facts about **CODE
ENFORCEMENT?**

- ❖ Tall grass and weeds cannot be taller than 6 inches
- ❖ Untagged or inoperable vehicles cannot be parked within City limits
- ❖ Interior furniture cannot be stored outside
- ❖ Trash accumulation in your yard is not allowed
- ❖ The siding on your house and/or accessory structure must be kept clean; no mold or mildew can be visible

*This is just a friendly reminder that the above items are violations and can be written up by code enforcement. Please keep your property **CLEAN** so we don't have to visit you!*

If you have any code enforcement questions, please feel free to call us at (410) 228-1955

For a full list of the City of Cambridge's property maintenance code requirements, please visit: www.choosecambridge.com



CLEANER STREETS MORE BUSINESSES!

Our Goal!

The City of Cambridge Department of Public Works is encouraging not only residents but businesses as well to keep their property and sidewalks free of any rubbish/trash or debris. One of the biggest causes of litter is cigarette butts, as well as food wrappers. Please be mindful this is a violation of the City's Municipal Code 16-10 Merchants to clean pavements. Every merchant, occupant or person in charge, or manager of any store, shop or other place of public business within the city shall remove all waste paper, peels, peanut hulls and trash from the pavement, streets and premises in front of their respective places of business, and sweep their pavements clean, or see that the pavements and premises and the street in front thereof are clean and tidy, on every Saturday night at the usual closing hour of the places of business. Thank you for keeping the City of Cambridge streets clean.

Fun Facts & Statistics from Maryland Department of the Environment

In Maryland every person generates over 7 pounds of trash each day. In just one day, Marylanders make enough trash to fill a football field 12 foot high. Every day, Maryland homes and businesses throw away 41 million pounds of solid waste. That is enough to make a wall (3ft. wide x 6ft high) that would go from Baltimore to Miami.

Negative Effects of Garbage on Streets

- Water, Soil & Air Contamination
- Bad impact on human health
- Disease-carrying pets
- Adversely affect the local economy

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Department of Public Works

1025 Washington Street
Cambridge, MD 21613
410-228-1955

www.choosecambridge.com