

Chapter 81

Unsafe Buildings Law

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[History: Adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Windsor 2-2-2000]

§ 81-1. **Purpose**

Unsafe buildings pose a threat to life and property in the Town of Windsor. It is the purpose of this local law to provide for the safety, health protection and general welfare of persons and property in the Town of Windsor by enabling the Town of Windsor to require such unsafe buildings be repaired or demolished and removed.

§ 81-2. **Definitions:**

- (1) "Building" means any building, structure or portion thereof used or formerly used for residential, business or industrial purposes.

- (2) "Building Inspector" means the building inspector of the Town of Windsor or such other person appointed by the Town Board to enforce the provisions of this local law.

§ 81-3. Investigation and Reporting

When in the opinion of the building inspector or upon receipt of information that a building:

- (1) is or may become dangerous or unsafe to the general public,
- (2) or is open at the doorways and windows making it accessible to and an object of attraction to minors under eighteen years of age, as well as to vagrants and other trespassers,
- (3) or is or may become a place of rodent infestation;
- (4) or presents any other danger to the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the public or
- (5) or is unfit for the purposes for which it may lawfully be used, the building inspector may cause or make an inspection thereof and report in writing to the Town Board his findings and recommendations in regard to its repair or demolition and removal.

§ 81-4. Town Board Order

The Town Board shall thereafter consider such report and by resolution determine, if in its sole opinion and discretion the report so warrants, that such building is unsafe and dangerous and order its repair if the same can be safely repaired, or requires its demolition and removal. The Town Board must further order, that a notice be served upon the persons and in the manner provided herein.

§ 81-5. Notice Contents.

The notice shall contain the following:

- (1) a description of the premises,
- (2) a statement of the particulars in which the building is unsafe or dangerous,

- (3) an order outlining the manner in which the building is to be made safe and secure, or demolished and removed,
- (4) a statement that the securing ,repair or removal of such building shall commence within 45 days of the service of the notice and shall be completed within 60 days thereafter, unless for good cause shown such time shall be extended,
- (5) a date, time and place for a hearing before the Town Board in relation to such dangerous or unsafe building, which hearing shall be scheduled not less than twenty (20) days from the date of service of the notice, and
- (6) a statement that in the event of neglect or refusal to comply with the order to secure or demolish and remove the building, the Town Board is authorized to provide for its demolition and removal, to assess all expense thereof against the land on which it is located and to institute a special proceeding to collect the costs of demolition, including but not limited to costs of any notice or proceeding and legal fees.

§ 81-6. Service of Notice.

A. The said notice shall be served:

- (1) by personal service of a copy thereof upon the owner, executor, administrator, agent, lessee, or any person having a vested or contingent interest in such unsafe building as shown by the records of the receiver of taxes (or tax collector) or of the county clerk' or if no such person can be reasonably found by mailing such owner by registered mail a copy of such notice directed to his last known address as shown by the above records and
- (2) by personal service of a copy of such notice upon any adult person residing in or occupying said premises if such person can be reasonably found and
- (3) by securely affixing a copy of such notice upon the unsafe building.

B. A copy of the notice served as provided herein shall be filed in the office of the County Clerk of the County of Broome.

§ 81-7. Refusal to Comply

In the event of refusal or neglect of the person so notified to comply with said order of the Town Board and after the hearing or default in appearance at such hearing, the Town Board may provide for the demolition and removal of such building or structure either by town employees or by contract. Except in emergency as provided in Section 11 hereof, any contract for demolition and removal of a building in excess of \$5,000.00 shall be awarded through competitive bidding.

§ 81-8. Assessment of Expenses

All expenses incurred by the Town in connection with the proceedings to repair and secure or demolish and remove the unsafe building, including the cost of actually removing such building, and all reasonable and necessary legal expenses incidental thereto, shall, at the sole option of the Windsor Town Board, either:

- (1) Be assessed against the land on which such building is located and shall be levied and collected in the same manner as provided in Article 15 of the Town Law for the levy and collection of a special ad valorem levy, or
- (2) Be collected by commencement of a special proceeding against the owner of said unsafe or dangerous building or structure pursuant to General Municipal Law Section 78-b.

§ 81-9. Emergency Cases

Where it reasonably appears that there is present a clear and imminent danger to the life, safety or health of any person or property, unless an unsafe building is immediately repaired and secured or demolished, the Town Board may by resolution authorize the building inspector to immediately cause the repair or demolition of such unsafe building. The expenses of such repair or demolition shall be a charge against the land on which it is located and shall be assessed, levied and collected as provided in Section 10 hereof.

§ 81-10. Separability

Each separate provision of this local law shall be deemed independent of all other provisions herein, and if any provisions shall be deemed or declared invalid, all other provisions hereof shall remain valid and enforceable.

§ 81-11. Repealer.

This local law shall supersede all prior local laws, ordinances, rules and regulations relative to the repair or removal of unsafe buildings and collapsed structures within the Town of Windsor and they shall be, upon the effective date of this ordinance, null and void.

Nothing in this law shall be construed to require the Town of Windsor to take action hereunder nor create any liability on the part of the Town of Windsor for not taking any action authorized hereby.