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MAYOR



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JOYCE WILSON
CITY MANAGER

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

MEMORANDUM

CITY CLERK DEPT.
08 APR 14 PM 1:17

TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Susie Byrd, City Representative, District #2
DATE: April 14, 2008
RE: Back up for Agenda Items #10A and #10B

Dear Mayor and Council:

On Tuesday's agenda, I am asking for consideration of two related items.

- 10A. Discussion and action on releasing city liens on 2731 Portland in return for any potential buyers removing blight, preserving the historic character, and returning the property to productive use. [Representative Susie Byrd, (915) 541-4416]
- 10B. Discussion and action on policy allowing the city to release city liens in return for public benefits such as affordable housing, removal of blight, and preservation of historic character. [Representative Susie Byrd, (915) 541-4416]

On item 10A, I am asking that the Council consider releasing the liens for board and secure that were placed on 2731 Portland during the condemnation process. This property is in the Manhattan Heights Historic District and has been condemned for blight. The property was in probate and was foreclosed for taxes. The property went to a public tax auction but was not sold. Since that time, the Preservation Alliance has put in an offer for the home but has asked that the liens be released in order to make it economic for them to rehabilitate the structure. I would ask that we release the liens but make rehabilitation of the property a condition of the release of liens.

On item 10B, I am asking that the City Council adopt a general policy that would allow the city to release liens in return for public benefits such as affordable housing, removal of blight and preservation of historic character. Often during a condemnation process, properties can rack up considerable liens for demolition and for boarding and securing. The amount of many of these liens can make it cost prohibitive to put the property back into productive use. As a result, we have many empty lots that may never be built on again because the cost of the land and the cost of the liens are too much for potential owners to bear. I think we should allow staff to bring release of liens forward if the property owner is not the one responsible for blight on a property and if the property owner agrees to build affordable housing, remove the blight or preserve an historic property.

Please let me know if you have any questions.


Susie