

ORDINANCE NO. 1638

**CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT
VACANT PROPERTY ORDINANCE**

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BOROUGH OF DORMONT, ALLEGHENY COUNTY, STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, ENACTING REGULATIONS RELATING TO VACANT BUILDINGS IN THE CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT, IN ADDITION TO THE PROVISIONS SET FORTH IN THE ADOPTED INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE.

The Borough finds as follows:

- A. The central business district (contained in the C Zoning District) is the most publicly visible area in this community. The condition of this district has significant economic and social impact on the community.
- B. When the owner of a vacant property in the central business district (C Zoning District) fails to actively maintain its condition and appearance, and does not strive to keep the property occupied with legally permitted uses, the building can become a major cause of blight to this community. Vacant buildings discourage economic development and negatively impact appreciation of property values.
- C. It is the responsibility of property ownership to prevent their property from becoming a burden to this community and to the public health, safety, or welfare.
- D. One vacant property that is not well maintained and managed can be the core and cause of spreading blight.

Section 1. Applicability and Scope:

The requirements of this ordinance shall be applicable to every property in the "C" zoning district in the Borough of Dormont, and to each owner of any property in the "C" zoning district that has a vacant "ground floor" space, as defined by this ordinance.

Section 2. Definitions:

As used in this Ordinance the following words and phrases shall have the meanings indicated unless the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Property: Improved real estate including buildings or structures.

Vacant: A building or structure space shall be deemed to be vacant if no person or persons currently conduct a lawfully licensed use in said space.

Ground Floor: Any floor of a building with direct access to grade, that is located less than one story above, or less than one story below grade, provided that no portion of a floor that constitutes a cellar (as defined in this article) shall constitute a "ground floor".

Cellar: A room typically used for storage and mechanical equipment that is located in the basement of a building and is not used for commercial or residential purposes.

Section 3. Vacant Property Monitoring Fee:

During each calendar year, the municipality will identify ground-floor spaces in the "C" Zoning District that are deemed vacant as defined by this ordinance.

The vacancy "Start Date" shall be the date of mailing of a written notification by the municipality that the subject property's ground-floor space has been identified as vacant. On the 45th day after the "Start Date", should said ground floor space remain vacant as defined in this ordinance, the owner of the building in which said vacant space is present shall be required to pay a vacant property monitoring fee, to be established by resolution of the municipal government.

There shall be no pro-ration of the monitoring fee.

The monitoring fee shall not be imposed on vacant properties, as defined in this ordinance, that are the subject of an active building permit for repair or rehabilitation, and the owner is progressing diligently to complete said repair or rehabilitation.

Section 4. Vacant Property Monitoring Fee Waiver:

The monitoring fee, as required herein, shall be waived in full by the municipality if, by the 45th day after written notification as described in Section 3 herein, all of the following conditions are present:

1. The street-level exterior building components in which said ground-floor vacancy is identified are clean (including glass inside and out). A minimum of 70% window transparency must be maintained.
2. The property is not in violation of any provision of the Township's property maintenance code(s), or any other municipal ordinance.
3. A professionally produced legal sign is prominently displayed promoting the vacant space for sale and/or for lease, providing (at least) a contact phone number for information and showings. Said sign must be in compliance with applicable sign ordinance(s), and at minimum it's font size must be reasonably readable from the adjacent roadway. Handwritten signs are not permitted relative to this requirement.
4. All local real estate taxes are paid in full.


The monitoring fee waiver may be revoked by the municipality if any of the above required conditions is not in place continuously until the vacant condition no longer exists.

Section 5. Severability:

If any section, subsection, sentence, or clause of this Ordinance is held, for any reason, to be invalid, such decision or decisions shall not affect the validity of the remaining portions of this Ordinance.

Ordained and Enacted this 1st of March, 2021, by the Borough of Dormont


Borough Manager/Secretary


President, Jeffrey Fabus