

**Open Work Session  
Procedure Regarding Release of Liens in Accordance with Tax-Property Article Section 14-806  
August 21, 2018**

Mr. Bob Taylor said he will give a brief background on this item. He said a continuing problem in this County, and elsewhere in Maryland, has been what he calls derelict, or abandoned properties that are unfit for habitation or other use, and tend to just get turned around in tax sales because nobody wants them. He said, as they saw last year, there was at least one municipality that was interested in taking some property in that municipality to rehab it, and wanted a waiver of the County taxes, but, under current law, that cannot be done. He said Maryland tax law is quite State-dominated, and the local jurisdictions can only do what the State lets them do. He said, to make a long story short, the General Assembly appointed a Commission a couple of years ago, and they came up with various recommendations, which are in Senate Bill 951. He said most of them have to do with tax sale procedures, but one in particular does not, and it has to do with taxes. He explained, it allows the kind of waiver he just mentioned where a municipality, a nonprofit organization, or even a private person wants to take that type of property, which he will call derelict, and rejuvenate it, and this Bill sets up a procedure whereby the County, or, for that matter, a municipality, can waive those taxes. He said that particular part of Senate Bill 951 involves various somewhat complex criteria that have to be met to do that, but he will not reiterate them unless Council wants him to. He said the purpose of the Resolution is to set up a procedure for making sure that those various criteria are satisfied by the County Attorney, who would take a look at it and make a recommendation to Council, as well as run it by the County Executive. He clarified, this would be on a case-by-case basis every time somebody applies for a parcel or parcels where they want to do this. He said there also may be a 501(c)(3), such as Habitat for Humanity, and other groups besides municipalities who are interested. He said the purpose of the Resolution is, essentially, to have a formal process in place for doing this. He said Senate Bill 951 becomes effective October 1<sup>st</sup>, so it could be as soon as then, or very shortly thereafter that the County could begin getting applications.

Mr. Kilmer said he knows Mardela Springs had a desire to do this with a couple of properties, and he thinks Willards also wanted to do that. He said Mr. Taylor said it would have to meet certain criteria, such as being vacant and unfit for habitation. He then asked if it could just be any property that is on the tax sale list, to which Mr. Taylor responded, theoretically, it could be, but most of them probably would not meet this criteria, and, even if they did, Bill 951 is not mandatory. He clarified, Council does not have to do it, so, if they feel there is something fishy or squishy in a particular application, they can always say no. Mr. Kilmer said he thinks it would be good to go down the road of exploring this, and seeing what the Administration thinks about it, but it would be good to have the ability to do this when cases arise.

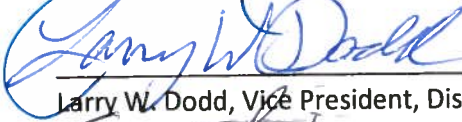
Mr. Cannon said he assumes it is the desire of the Executive Branch to move this forward, to which Mr. Strausburg, Director of Administration, speaking from the audience, responded, yes.

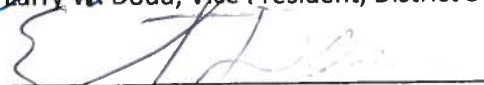
Mr. Joe Holloway asked if there has been a list put together of properties the County has in this situation, to which Executive Culver, speaking from the audience, responded, there are a lot of tax sales that have gone on year after year. He said, in the case in Willards, it is dilapidated, and they want to go ahead and tear it down or rehab it, or possibly sell the lot so they can put a residence there and get it back on the tax rolls because they do not foresee it ever having taxes paid otherwise.


Mr. Cannon said Council pretty much has a consensus that they are okay with this, to which Council agreed. He then asked Mr. Taylor what the next step is in regards to this, to which Mr. Taylor

responded, to put it together as a Resolution and bring it to Council. He said, if it can be passed by October 1st, he thinks that might be good, but it would not be the end of the world if it is not, though it would seem to make sense. Mr. Cannon said they will keep the Agenda open for it to come in, and he thinks this is the only Work Session they need for this. There was no further discussion.

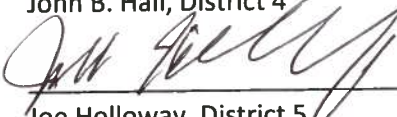
  
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John T. Cannon, President

  
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Larry W. Dodd, Vice President, District 3


  
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Ernest F. Davis, District 1

  
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Marc Kilmer, District 2

\_\_absent\_\_\_\_\_  
John B. Hall, District 4

  
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Joe Holloway, District 5

\_\_absent\_\_\_\_\_  
Matt Holloway, At-Large

  
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Laura Hurley, Council Administrator