

TOWNSHIP OF WATSON  
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN  
ORDINANCE NO. 90-3  
ADOPTED: October 4, 1990 – EFFECTIVE: October 26, 1990  
DANGEROUS BUILDING ORDINANCE

An ordinance to secure the public peace, health, safety and welfare of the residents and property owners of the Township of Watson, Allegan County Michigan, by the regulation of dangerous buildings injurious to life or health; to provide for the appointment of a hearing officer, to provide penalties for the violation of said ordinance; to provide for assessment of the cost of said making safe or demolition of dangerous buildings; and to repeal all ordinances and parts of ordinance in conflict therewith.

THE TOWNSHIP OF WATSON  
ALLEGAN COUNTY, MICHIGAN  
ORDAINS;

SECTION I

This ordinance shall be known and cited as the Watson Township Dangerous Buildings Ordinance.

SECTION II

As used in this ordinance, the term, “dangerous building” means any building or structure, residential or otherwise, which has any of the following defects or is in any of the following conditions:

- A. Whenever any door, aisle, passageway, stairway or other means of ingress or egress does not conform to the building codes or fire codes effective within the Township, it shall be considered that such building does not meet the requirements of this ordinance.
- B. Whenever any portion has been damaged by fire, wind, floor, or by any other cause in such a manner that the structural strength or stability is appreciably less than it was before such catastrophe and is less than the minimum requirements of the Housing Law of the State of Michigan, being Act No. 167 of the Public Acts of 1917, as amended, or the building codes of the Township for a new building or similar structure, purpose or location.
- C. Whenever any portion of member or appurtenance is likely to fall or to become detached or dislodged, or the collapse and thereby injure persons or damage property.
- D. Whenever any portion has settled to such an extent that walls or other structural portions have materially less resistance to winds than is required in the case of new construction by the housing Law of the State of Michigan, Being Act 167 of the Public Acts of 1917, as amended, or the Building Codes of the Township.
- E. Whenever the building or structure or any part, because of dilapidation, deterioration, decay, faulty construction, or because of the removal or movement of some portion of the ground necessary for the purpose of supporting such building or portion thereof, or for other reason, is likely to fall or give way.
- F. Whenever for any reason whatsoever the building or structure or any portion is manifestly unsafe for the purpose for which it is used.
- G. When the building or structure has been so damaged by fire, wind or flood, or has become so dilapidated or deteriorated as to become an attractive nuisance to children who might play therein to their danger, or as to afford a harbor for vagrants, criminals or immoral persons, or as to enable persons to resort thereto for the purpose of committing a nuisance or unlawful or immoral acts.
- H. Whenever a building or structure, because of dilapidation, decay, damage, or faulty construction or arrangement or otherwise, is unsanitary or unfit for human habitation or is in a condition that is likely to cause sickness or disease when so determined by the health officer of the Township or County of Allegan, or is likely to work injury to the health, safety or general welfare of those living or working within.
- I. Whenever any building becomes vacant, dilapidated and open at door or window, leaving the interior of the building exposed to the elements or accessible to entrance by trespassers.
- J. Whenever any unoccupied building is boarded up for a period of more than six months without an extension granted by the hearing officer appointed pursuant to Section V of this ordinance; any extension granted shall be granted pursuant to a hearing as set forth in Section V, Provided, However, that no action shall be taken under this ordinance regarding any such building, unless such building is also a “dangerous building” as defined in one or more other subsections of this Section of this ordinance.
- K. The term “dangerous building” shall also include any sign, fence, shed, lean-to, cellar or other structure which has become so rotted, broken, infirm or dilapidated so as to endanger persons or property.

### SECTION III

It shall be unlawful for any owner or agent thereof to keep or maintain any building or part thereof, which is a dangerous building as defined in this ordinance.

### SECTION IV

- A. When the whole or any part of any building or structure is found to be in a dangerous condition, the Township building inspector shall issue a notice of the dangerous condition.
- B. Such notice shall be directed to the owner of or party in interest in the building in whose name the property appears on the last local tax assessment records of the Township.
- C. The notice shall specify the time and place of a hearing on the condition of the building or structure at which time and place the person to whom the notice is directed shall have the opportunity to show cause why the building or structure should not be ordered to be demolished or otherwise made safe.
- D. All such notices required by this ordinance shall be in writing and shall be served upon the person to whom they are directed personally, or in lieu of personal service, may be mailed by Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested, addressed to such owner or party in interest at the address shown on the tax records at least 10 days before the date of the said hearing. If any person to whom a notice is directed is not personally served, in addition to mailing the notice, a copy thereof shall be posted upon a conspicuous part of the building or structure at least 10 days prior to the hearing date.

### SECTION V

- A. A hearing officer shall be appointed by the Township Supervisor to serve at the pleasure of the Supervisor.
- B. The building inspector shall file a copy of the notice of the dangerous condition of any building with the hearing officer.
- C. At any hearing held, the hearing officer shall take testimony of the building inspector, the owner of the property, and any other interested party. Upon the taking of such testimony, the officer shall render a decision either closing the proceedings or ordering the building to be demolished or otherwise made safe.
- D. If it is determined by the hearing officer that the building or structure should be demolished otherwise made safe, said officer shall so order fixing a time in the order for the owner or party in interest to comply therewith.
- E. If the owner or party in interest fails to appear or neglects or refuses to comply with the order, the hearing officer shall file a report of the findings and a copy of the order with the Township Board and request that the necessary action be taken to demolish or otherwise make safe the building or structure. A copy of such findings and order of the hearing officer shall be served on the owner or party in interest in the manner prescribed in Section IV (D).

### SECTION VI

Upon receiving the findings and order of the hearing officer, the Township Board shall fix a date for hearing, reviewing the findings and order of the hearing officer and shall give notice to the owner or party in interest in the manner prescribed in Section IV (D) of the time and place of the hearing. At the hearing, the owner or party in interest shall be given the opportunity to show cause why the building should not be demolished or otherwise made safe and the Township Board shall either approve, disapprove or modify the order for demolition or making safe of the building or structure.

### SECTION VII

In the event of the failure or refusal of the owner or party in interest to comply with the decision or the Township Board, the Township Board may, in its discretion, contract for the demolition or making safe of the dangerous building. The cost of the demolition or making the building safe shall be a lien against the real property and shall be reported to the assessing officer of the Township who shall assess the cost against the property on which the building or structure is located. The owner or party in interest in whose name the property appears upon the last local tax assessment records of the Township shall be notified of the amount of such cost by first class mail at the address shown on the records. If the owner or party in interest fails to pay the same within thirty days after mailing by the assessor of the notice of the amount thereof, the assessor shall add the same to the next tax roll of the Township and the same shall be collected in the same manner in all respects as provided by law for the collection of taxes by the Township.

#### SECTION VIII

An owner or party in interest aggrieved by any final decision of the Township Board may appeal the decision or order to the Circuit Court for the County of Allegan by filing a petition for an order of superintending control within 20 days after the date of such decision.

If the building inspector believes an immediate serious danger exists to the public where a vacant building or structure is left open to casual entry, the building inspector may give notice by personal service to the owner of record as shown on the current tax roll or by leaving such notice at his or her place of residence as shown on the current tax roll, and also similarly serving any other interested persons (as shown on the tax roll) pertaining to a hearing on the matter to be held no sooner than 24 hours after effecting such service. The purpose of the hearing shall be to consider the request of the building inspector that the Township be authorized to go upon the property for the express purpose of boarding up or making the premises secure from casual entry immediately.

After taking testimony from the building inspector, owner (if he or she appears) and other interested persons who may appear, the hearing officer shall consider the urgency of the matter, whether a real danger exists to persons, including minors, who might enter the building or structure and whether there is evidence that unauthorized persons are or have entered the premises. If the hearing officer believes that such immediate dangers exist by the building or structure remaining open to casual entry, the hearing officer may authorize such work as may be necessary to done by the Township immediately to make the premises secure. The cost of such work shall be paid by the property owner within 30 days of billing by the Township. If such costs are not paid, the Township may institute suit to collect same or take such other action as may be allowed by law to compel payment.

#### SECTION IX

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

#### SECTION X

This ordinance shall take effect on October 25, 1990

Township of Watson  
Catherine Pardee, clerk