



CITY OF LYNN

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In City Council: March 4, 2014
Adopted: March 11, 2014
Effective: April 11, 2014

IN THE YEAR TWO THOUSAND FOURTEEN AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE ORDINANCE TO ESTABLISH A BILL OF RIGHTS FOR HOMEOWNERS IN THE CITY OF LYNN

SECTION 1:00 PURPOSE

Unsecured and unmaintained vacant properties foreclosing properties and foreclosed properties present a danger to the safety and welfare of public safety officers, the public, occupants, abutters, and neighborhoods and, as such, constitute a public nuisance. This Ordinance is enacted to promote the health, safety and welfare of the public, to protect and preserve the quiet enjoyment of occupants, abutters, and neighborhoods, and to minimize hazards to public safety personnel inspecting or entering such properties.

SECTION 2:00 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this article, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:

"CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE" shall mean a certificate issued by the ISD Chief to the Responsible Party for a Vacant, and/or Foreclosing and/or Foreclosed Property upon compliance with the provisions of Section 13.

"CERTIFICATE OF MEDIATION COMPLETION" shall mean a certificate issued by the Mediation Program Manager upon Good Faith Effort in mediation if a mutually-agreeable commercially reasonable alternative to foreclosure cannot be reached. The Certificate of Mediation Completion shall be signed by authorized representatives of both the Mediation Program Manager and the City.

"CITY" shall mean City of Lynn.

“COMMERCIALLY REASONABLE ALTERNATIVE” shall mean an alternative based on a comparison of the net present value of receiving payments pursuant to a modified mortgage loan, or the likely financial recovery from other foreclosure alternatives, to the anticipated net recovery following foreclosure incorporating an assessment of the borrower’s current circumstances, including, without limitation, the borrower’s current income, debts, and obligations.

“DAYS” shall mean consecutive calendar days.

“ENTITY” shall mean a business organization, or any other kind of organization, including without limitation, a corporation, partnership, trust, limited liability corporation, limited liability partnership, joint venture, sole proprietorship, or any other category of organization, and any employee, agent, servant or other representative of such entity.

“EVICTION” shall mean any action, without limitation, by a Foreclosure Sale Purchaser of Residential Property which is intended to compel an occupant to vacate or to be constructively evicted from such Residential Property

“FAIR MARKET RENT” shall mean an amount equal to that established by the most recent United States Census Bureau American Community Survey for the City of Lynn, which shall be fair market value only, for a unit of comparable size in the area in which the Residential Property is located.

“FIRE CHIEF” shall mean the chief of the Lynn Fire Department or his or her designee.

“FORECLOSED PROPERTY” shall mean a property on which a Foreclosure Deed has been recorded until such property has been purchased from a Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer.

“FORECLOSING PROPERTY” shall mean a property on which the Mortgagee or its agent has filed a Complaint with the Land Court or Superior Court pursuant to the Massachusetts Service Members Civil Relief Act until such time as a Foreclosure Deed has been recorded in the Southern Essex Registry of Deeds.

“FORECLOSURE” shall mean termination of a Mortgagor's equity of redemption in property, by action, bill in equity, entry, and/or power of sale.

“FORECLOSURE SALE” shall mean the foreclosure of a Mortgage of a Residential Property pursuant to a power of sale in a mortgage and as described in M.G.L. c. 244.

“FORECLOSURE SALE PURCHASER” shall mean a Foreclosing Owner as defined below, or a person or entity who purchases Residential Property from a Foreclosing Owner and not intending to reside or have a family member reside in such Residential Property as the primary residence.

“FORECLOSING OWNER” shall mean an entity that both:

- A. Held or owned a Mortgage Loan in the Property at any point prior to the foreclosure of the Property or is the subsidiary, parent, or agent of, or otherwise is related to any entity

which held or owned the Mortgage in the Property at any time prior to the foreclosure of the Property; and

B. Holds title to this Property that it acquired at a foreclosure sale or by any other method of foreclosure and holds a security interest in three or more Mortgage Loans.

For purpose of this definition, the phrase 'holds title' shall include an entity which holds title in any capacity, directly or indirectly, without limitation, whether in its own name, as trustee, or as beneficiary.

“GOOD FAITH EFFORT” shall mean each party to the Mediation is present, has decision-making authority to negotiate and agree upon a Commercially Reasonable Alternative to Foreclosure, provides required documentation, and actively participates in the Mediation process.

“HOMEOWNER” see definition of Mortgagor defined by this section.

“ISD DIRECTOR” shall mean the Director of the Inspectional Services Department for the City of Lynn.

“JUST CAUSE” shall mean at least one of the following:

- A. The Occupant has failed to timely pay last established rent prior to the Foreclosure Sale; and if no rent has been established, reasonable use and occupancy charges shall be established by Fair Market Rent, but only if the Foreclosure Sale Purchaser notified the Occupant in writing on or about the time of the recording of the foreclosure deed or a reasonable time thereafter, of the amount of rent or use and occupancy that was to be paid and to whom it was to be paid;
- B. The Occupant has violated an obligation or covenant of the occupancy other than the obligation to surrender possession upon proper notice and has failed to cure such violation within a reasonable time after having received written notice thereof from the Foreclosure Sale Purchaser;
- C. The Occupant is committing or permitting to exist a nuisance in, or is causing substantial damage to, the Property, or is creating a substantial interference with the quiet enjoyment of other occupants;
- D. The Occupant is convicted of using or permitting the unit to be used for any illegal purpose;
- E. The Occupant has refused to provide reasonable access to the Property to the Foreclosure Sale Purchaser for the purpose of making necessary repairs or improvement required by the laws of the United States, the Commonwealth or any subdivision thereof, or for the purpose of inspection as permitted or required by agreement or by law or for the purpose of showing the rental housing unit to a prospective purchaser.

“MEDIATION CONFERENCE” shall mean the formal discussion and negotiation undertaken by the parties in a Good Faith Effort to negotiate and agree upon a Commercially Reasonable Alternative to foreclosure, and held in the City or at a location mutually convenient to the parties. Both the Mortgagor and Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer must be physically present for the Mediation Conference unless telephone participation is mutually agreed upon and the Mediation Program Manager certifies that the Mortgagor has been made aware of his or her right to an in-person Mediation Conference. The Mortgagor shall be allowed to have a lawyer, an interpreter, and up to three additional persons of his or her choosing present at the Mediation Conference. The Mortgagor shall be notified of this right at the time the Mediation Conference is scheduled by the Mediation Program Manager.

“MEDIATION PROGRAM” shall mean the foreclosure mediation program established in the City pursuant to this article and described in Section 4:00.

“MEDIATION PROGRAM MANAGER” shall mean a neutral not-for-profit organization, attorney, or qualified third party experienced in the mediation of the foreclosure process, familiar with all programs available to help homeowners avoid foreclosure, knowledgeable of the mortgage foreclosure laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and having no ownership interest or management interest in residential housing in the City other than their primary residence. The Mediation Program Manager shall sign a user agreement with the City authorizing the receipt and use of personal and financial information for the purposes of the Mediation Program only. The Mediation Program Manager shall ensure the security and confidentiality of any and all information received or exchanged under the program consistent with applicable federal, state, and City laws. Access to such program information shall be limited to those officers and employees of the organization who require the information to properly perform services under the Mediation Program, and that the organization and its officers and employees may not access, modify, use or disseminate such information for inconsistent or unauthorized purposes.

“MEDIATOR” shall mean an individual:

- A. Whose training complies with the qualification standards for neutrals specified in the guidelines for training mediators adopted by the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts pursuant to Rule 8 of the Uniform Rules for Dispute Resolution; and
- B. Who has completed training on foreclosure mediation; and
- C. Who has a working knowledge of all federal, state, and City programs available to help homeowners retain their homes

“MORTGAGE DOCUMENTS” shall include the promissory note, including any allonges, additional pages, and other evidence of all endorsements; mortgage; loan agreement; assignments (recorded and unrecorded); powers of attorney granted by the Mortgagee or

Homeowner to entities acting on its behalf; and any other documents evidencing or securing a Mortgage Loan.

“MORTGAGE LOAN” shall mean a loan, in the form of a promissory note, to one or more natural persons, or to a nominee trust or residential trust on behalf of one or more natural persons, made for non-commercial purposes and secured wholly or partially by a mortgage on residential property in the City which is the principal residence of one or more borrowers of the loan or their family members, or in the case of a nominee trust, one or more of the beneficiaries of the trust.

“MORTGAGE SERVICER” shall mean an entity which administers or services or at any point administered or serviced the Mortgage Loan; provided, however, that such administration or servicing shall include, but not be limited to, calculating principal and interest due on the mortgage loan, assessing fees and costs onto a mortgagor’s loan account, collecting regular payments from the mortgagor, acting as escrow agent for the owner of the Mortgage Loan or foreclosing on a Mortgage Loan in the event of a default.

“MORTGAGEE” shall mean an entity that is the present holder of the Mortgage Loan.

“MORTGAGOR” shall mean a natural person or residential trust who received a Mortgage Loan secured by a Residential Property located in the City, and for whom such Residential Property is his/her principal residence.

“NET RECOVERY FOLLOWING FORECLOSURE” shall mean a monetary value that includes, but is not limited to, projected costs from:

- A. Delinquency, interest, fees incurred by the date of foreclosure sale based on average length of Massachusetts foreclosure process;
- B. Costs of all legally required actions to foreclose and percentage loss from foreclosure sale;
- C. Meeting all sanitary code requirements;
- D. Property maintenance;
- E. Eviction; and
- F. Other ownership costs until projected sale or re-sale to third party purchaser.

“OCCUPANT” shall mean any person or group of persons, including the Mortgagor, who occupied Residential Property prior to a Foreclosure Sale.

“PARTIES” shall mean the Mortgagor and the Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer.

“PERSON” shall mean any individual, corporation, partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability company, trust or other entity.

“PROPERTY” means any real property, residential or commercial, or portion thereof, located in the City, including building or structures situated on the property.

“RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY” shall mean real property located in the City that is either a single-family dwelling or a structure containing not more than four residential units, and shall also include a residential condominium unit or a residential co-op unit.

“RESPONSIBLE PARTY” shall mean:

Every Person, entity, servicer, property manager, or real estate broker, who or which, alone or severally with others:

1. Has care, charge or control of Property, including but not limited to any dwelling, dwelling unit, mobile dwelling unit or parcel of land, vacant or otherwise, including a mobile home park, or any administrator, executor, trustee or guardian of the estate of the holder of legal title; or
2. Is a Mortgagee of any such Property who has filed a Complaint with the Land Court or Superior Court pursuant to the Massachusetts Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Civil Relief Act (St. 1943, c. 57 (1943), as amended through St. 1988, c. 142), including its successors or assigns; or
3. Is an agent, trustee or other Person appointed by the courts and vested with possession or control of any such Property;
4. Is a Mortgagee who has made entry on any such Property, pursuant to the terms of the Mortgage, in order to make repairs upon Mortgagor's failure to do so.

“VACANT PROPERTY” shall mean structure or building not legally occupied.

“UNIT” or “RESIDENTIAL UNIT” shall mean the room or group of rooms within a Property, located in the City, which is used or intended for use as a residence by one household.

SECTION 3:00 **MANDATORY MEDIATION BEFORE FORECLOSURE ON RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES**

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all Mortgagees who have sent the Notice of the Right to Cure pursuant to M.G.L. c. 244, § 35A pertaining to Residential Property in the City shall be required to engage in a Mediation Program as set out in this Ordinance.

SECTION 4:00 **ESTABLISHMENT OF A MEDIATION PROGRAM**

The City is hereby empowered to establish such Mediation Program, in accordance with this Ordinance, and promulgate additional regulations as necessary and appropriate to implementing such a Mediation Program utilizing a Mediation Program Manager approved by the City Solicitor to mediate between the Mortgagee and Mortgagor. Such Mediation shall be facilitated by a Mediation Program Manager, approved by the City Solicitor according to procedures established by this Ordinance. The City Solicitor is hereby authorized and empowered to enter into an agreement with a Mediation Program Manager.

SECTION 5:00 **SCOPE OF MEDIATION PROGRAM**

A. The Mediation Program shall provide mediation prior to all Foreclosures of Residential Property in which the Mortgagor(s) or Mortgagor(s)'s family resides. The Program shall address all issues reasonably related to a Foreclosures on Residential Property, including but not limited to all Commercially Reasonable Alternatives to Foreclosure. The Parties are required to make a Good Faith Effort in Mediation as defined in this Ordinance. Mediations conducted pursuant to the Program shall use the calculations, assumptions and forms that are established by or are a made available through:

- (1) The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation and published in the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporations Loan Modification Program Guide available on the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's publicly accessible website;
- (2) The Home Affordable Modification Program;
- (3) Any modification program that a Mortgagee may use which is based on accepted principles and the safety and soundness of the institution and recognized by the National Credit Union Administration, the Division of Banks;
- (4) The Federal Housing Authority; or
- (5) Similar federal loan modification programs.

B. The City Solicitor's Office shall provide for a means of evaluating and selecting qualified Mediation Program Managers. The City Solicitor's Office shall also provide for a means of assessing and evaluating annually the City's Mediation Program, including reports and data related to:

- (1) The number of Mortgagors who are notified of Mediation;
- (2) The number of Mortgagors who attend mediation and who receive counseling or assistance;
- (3) The number of Certificates of Mediation completion issued under the Program; and

- (4) The results of the Mediation Program, including the number of loans restructured, number of principal write-downs, total value of principal write-downs, number of interest rate reductions and, to the extent such information is available, the number of mortgagors who default on mortgages within a year after restructuring, and the number of short sales and any other alternatives to foreclosure.

- B. The City Solicitor's Office may terminate a Mediation Program Manager's participation in the Mediation Program for good cause. In such case, the Mediation Program Manager shall deliver to the City Solicitor's Office all records and information in its possession for appropriate preservation and storage.

SECTION 6:00 CONFIDENTIALITY IN MEDIATION

Except for financial information otherwise permitted by law to be disclosed, any financial statements or information provided to the City or its approved independent counseling agencies or provided to the Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer or Mortgagor during the course of Mediation in accordance with this Ordinance is confidential and shall not be available for public inspection. Any financial statement or information required to reasonably facilitate the Mediation shall be made available as necessary to the mediator and to the attorneys or representatives, if any, of the parties to the Mediation. Any financial statement or information designated as confidential under this section shall be kept separate and apart from other papers and matters not the subject of the mediation. No Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer shall be required to disclose information in violation of M.G.L. c. 93H, and 201 CMR 17. No information provided by the Mortgagor in the course of the Mediation may be used by the Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer or its Agents in a subsequent legal proceeding.

SECTION 7:00 NOTICE

For the purpose of the Mediation Program established by the City, a Mortgagee shall send a copy of all notices given to a Mortgagor pursuant to M.G.L. c. 244 § 35A(g), (h) which relate to Residential Property in the City, to the City of Lynn c/o The City Solicitor, Lynn City Hall, 3 City Hall Square, Lynn, MA 01901, within ten (10) days of giving such notices to a Mortgagor. The receipt by the City of said notice, or of a request for mediation from the Mortgagor made within fifteen (15) days of receipt of a Mortgagor's notice pursuant to M.G.L. c. 244 § 35A(g), (h), shall constitute the beginning of the Mediation process as set forth in this Ordinance. At that time the City Solicitor shall notify a Mortgagee and a Mortgagor of their rights and responsibilities under this Ordinance regarding Mediation. It is the intent and purpose of this Ordinance that Mediation commence no later than 45 days of the Mortgagor receiving notice of his or her right to cure as provided in M.G.L. c. 244, § 35A(g) and (h). The City Solicitor's Office shall refer the matter for Mediation to an approved Mediation Program Manager, which shall have the responsibility of assigning a mediator and scheduling the parties to immediately commence mediation pursuant to this Ordinance. The mediation shall proceed with the parties' Good Faith Effort to negotiate and agree upon a Commercially Reasonable Alternative to Foreclosure. The mediation shall continue without delay until completion, but shall in no way constitute an extension of the foreclosure process, nor an extension of the right to cure period.

Notwithstanding the limitation in the previous sentence, the mediation may be extended by mutual agreement.

SECTION 8:00 **ADMINISTRATION OF MEDIATION PROGRAM**

The Mediation Program established by this Ordinance shall include, and be not limited to, the following steps:

- A. The parties shall participate in a mandatory Mediation Conference at a location mutually convenient to the parties. All Parties and/or their respective representatives present at said Mediation Conference must have authority to enter into any agreements renegotiating the mortgage that is the subject of the foreclosure, or to otherwise resolve the pending foreclosure.

- C. Said Mediation Conference shall be scheduled at a time and place to be determined by the Mediation Program Manager, but not later than 45 days following the Mortgagor's receipt of his or her notice of right to cure under M.G.L. c. 244, §35A (g) and (h). The Parties will be sent notice under the Mediation Program by certified and first class mail at the Parties' last known address(es), if any, or if none, then to the address to which the tax collector last sent the tax bill for the Property. The notice shall contain the following declaration on the first page in English, Spanish, Cambodian, Russian, Greek, Vietnamese, French, Haitian Creole, and in any other language which the Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer knows is the Mortgagor's primary language, and any other language deemed appropriate by the Mediation Program Manager: "The City of Lynn has a mediation program that may help you negotiate more affordable mortgage payments and avoid foreclosure however there is no express or implied guarantee foreclosure will be avoided. Have this notice translated at once and contact us for help." If a Mortgagor does not respond to the initial notice, the Mediation Program Manager shall, to the extent possible, utilize additional outreach methods to supplement mailed notices.

- C. Prior to the scheduled Mediation Conference, the Mortgagor shall be assigned a City-approved loan counselor. If the Mortgagor is already working with a City-approved loan counselor, no assignment is necessary. However, such loan counselor must agree to work with the Mortgagor during the mediation process in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance.

The Mortgagor shall be encouraged to attend a group orientation, if available, prior to the Mediation Conference. Such orientations shall be scheduled as necessary at times convenient to Mortgagors. Interpretation shall be offered to Mortgagors ahead of time, and provided at the orientation if deemed necessary by the Mortgagor. The following shall be invited to participate in the design and implementation of the orientation: Mediation Program Manager, one or more local legal services organizations, and one or more community organizations operating in the City that provide advocacy and peer-to-peer support for distressed homeowners.

The orientation shall familiarize Mortgagors with the full range of options that are

available as Commercially Reasonable Alternatives to foreclosure, with the foreclosure process, and with obligations of Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicers under the Mediation Program.

- D. The Mortgagor and Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer shall cooperate in all respects with the Mediation Program Manager. The Mortgagor shall complete any and all loan resolution proposals and applications as appropriate and provide evidence of all current income. The Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer's representative shall bring and make available the Mortgage Documents, as well as a detailed accounting of the outstanding balance, costs and fees.
- E. If, after two attempts by the Mediation Program Manager to contact the Mortgagor by mail, the Mortgagor fails to respond to the Mediation Program Manager's request to appear for the Mediation Conference, the requirements of this Ordinance will be deemed to be satisfied upon verification by the City-approved Mediation Program Manager that the required notice was sent. If these conditions are met, a Certificate of Mediation Completion shall be issued promptly, signed by authorized representatives of both the Mediation Program Manager and the City, and distributed to the Mortgagee or Mortgage Servicer by the City directly.
- F. If it is determined, after a Good Faith Effort, that the Parties cannot come to a mutually agreeable, Commercially Reasonable Alternative to foreclosure, such Good Faith Effort on behalf of the Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of this Ordinance. A Certificate of Mediation Completion pursuant to this article shall be issued promptly, signed by authorized representatives of both the Mediation Program Manager and the City, and distributed to the Mortgagee or Mortgage Servicer by the City directly, authorizing the Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer to proceed with a Foreclosure in accordance with the terms of the Mortgage and the relevant statutes.

SECTION 9:00 **MEDIATION PROGRAM FEE**

The City Solicitor is hereby authorized to approve and from time to time revise, with the agreement of the Mediation Program Manager, reasonable and appropriate administrative fees and mediation fees to be charged to the Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer for the services attendant to administering the Mediation Program established under this Ordinance. Any fees assessed pursuant to this Ordinance shall not be charged to the Mortgagor. The administrative fees and mediation fees will be paid directly to the Mediation Program Manager. It is intended there will be no cost of this Mediation Program to be borne by the City.

SECTION 10:00 **RECORDING OF CERTIFICATE FOR FORECLOSURE BY SALE**

After a foreclosure by sale of a Residential Property in the city, and either prior to or simultaneous with the recording requirements of M.G.L. c. 244, § 15, a seller shall file the Certificate of Mediation Completion with the Southern Essex Registry of Deeds.

The City's Solicitor shall periodically request from the Southern Essex Register of Deeds information regarding attempts to record pursuant to M.G.L. c. 244, § 15 without complying with the recording requirements of this Ordinance.

SECTION 11:00 **RECORDING OF CERTIFICATE FOR FORECLOSURE BY ENTRY**

In the case of a No foreclosure by entry of a Residential Property in the City either prior to or simultaneous with the recording, the requirements of M.G.L. c. 244, § 2, a copy of the Certificate of Mediation shall be filed with the Southern Essex County Registry of Deeds.

The City's Solicitor shall periodically request from the Southern Essex Register of Deeds information regarding attempts to record pursuant to M.G.L. c. 244, § 2 without complying with the recording requirements of this Ordinance.

SECTION 12:00 **MEDIATION PROGRAM VIOLATIONS AND PENALTIES**

- A. A Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer's failure to comply with any and all sections 3:00 through 11:00 of this Ordinance shall result in a fine of three hundred (\$300) dollars payable to the City, for each instance of a violation, to be charged to the Mortgagee or its Mortgage Servicer in accordance with M.G.L. c. 40, § 21. The City shall be solely responsible for assessing and collecting all fines pursuant to this Ordinance. The Mediation Program Manager shall provide timely information to the City in order to determine whether a fine should be assessed.
- B. Every calendar day of noncompliance with sections 3.00 through 11.00 of this Ordinance shall constitute a separate violation subject to the penalties described under this section, up until the end of the right-to-cure period given under a lawful notice pursuant to M.G.L. c. 244, § 35A (g) and (h).
- C. Said fine or fines under this section shall be recovered by indictment or complaint pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40, § 21.
- D. No fines pursuant to this Ordinance shall be charged to the Mortgagor either directly or indirectly.

SECTION 13:00 **SECURING AND MAINTAINING VACANT, FORECLOSING AND FORECLOSED PROPERTIES**

- A. Maintenance and registration of Vacant, Foreclosing and Foreclosed Properties. All Responsible Parties shall:
 - (1) Maintain the Property in accordance with the Massachusetts State Sanitary Code, the Massachusetts State Building Code and all specialized codes incorporated therein, and any City ordinances concerning the maintenance of Property and the Lynn Zoning Ordinances; and

- (2) Provide the Fire Chief and ISD Director with the name, local (within 20 miles of the Property) address, and telephone number of a Responsible Party who can be contacted in case of emergency. The Responsible Party shall cause the name and contact number to be marked on the front of the Property as may be required by the Fire Chief or ISD Director; and
 - (3) Maintain liability insurance on the Property and furnish the ISD Director with a copy of said certificate of insurance; and,
 - (4) Provide a cash bond acceptable to the ISD Director, in the sum of not less than ten thousand (\$10,000) dollars, to secure the continued maintenance of the Property until it is no longer Vacant, Foreclosing or Foreclosed as defined by this Ordinance, and remunerate the City for any expenses incurred in inspecting, securing, marking or making safe such Property and, if applicable, the Property in which it is located. A portion of said bond shall be retained by the City as a fee to administer this Section. Pursuant to this Section, each Responsible Party must provide a bond for each Vacant, Foreclosing or Foreclosed Property it controls in the City.
 - (5) The cash bond requirement shall be waived if the Responsible Party is headquartered in the Commonwealth, is not a subsidiary of an entity headquartered outside the Commonwealth, and has recorded at the Southern Essex Registry of Deeds five (5) or fewer Foreclosure Deeds for Residential Properties in the City in the prior calendar year.
 - (6) Notify the ISD Director and Fire Chief in writing when the Property is sold or transferred. Upon satisfactory compliance with the provisions of Section 13, the ISD Director shall issue a certificate of compliance. Said certificate shall be valid for the length of time prescribed by the ISD Director and noted thereon; provided however, the certificate shall be subject to continued compliance with the provisions of this section.
- B. Maintenance and registration of Properties where ISD has deemed a Property to be abandoned by the Mortgagor but is still occupied. If ISD determines that a Property has been abandoned by the Mortgagor but Occupants remain, and conditions of disrepair threaten the health and safety of the occupants: ISD shall notify the Responsible Party of the conditions of disrepair in writing. The Responsible Party will then have fifteen (15) days to comply with the requirements set forth in Section 13:00(A).
- C. Maintenance of Vacant Properties. In addition to the requirements of Section 13:00(A), the Responsible Party, within fifteen (15) days of the property becoming vacant, shall:

- (1) As may be required by the Fire Chief, file one set of space utilization floor plans for any Buildings on said Vacant Property with the Fire Chief and one set of said plans with the ISD Director. The Responsible Party shall certify space utilization plans as accurate twice annually, in January and July; and
 - (2) Remove from the Vacant Property, to the satisfaction of the Fire Chief, hazardous material, as that term is defined in M.G.L. c. 21K, as that statute may be amended from time to time; and,
 - (3) At the discretion of the ISD Director, secure all windows and door openings and ensure that the Property is secured from all unauthorized entry continuously in accordance with the United States Fire Administration, National Arson Initiative Board up Procedures or provide twenty-four (24) hour on-site security personnel on the Property; and,
 - (4) Post "No Trespassing" signs on the Property; and
 - (5) Maintain the Property in accordance with this section, free of overgrowth, trash and debris, and pools of stagnant water, and ensure that structures are maintained in a structurally sound condition; and
- D. Signs and markings. When required pursuant to this section, signs or markings shall be applied on the front of the Property, and elsewhere as the Fire Chief and ISD Director may require, at or above the second floor level and shall not be placed over doors, windows, or other openings. All signs/markings shall be visible from the street and, when requested by the Fire Chief or ISD Director, shall be placed on the sides and rear of the Property. Signs/Markings shall be a minimum of 24 inches by 24 inches, with lines of two-inch width, and shall have a reflective background, or be painted with reflective paint, in contrasting colors. Signs/Markings shall be applied directly on the surface of the Property and shall state the date of posting and the most recent date of inspection by the Fire Chief and ISD Director.
- E. Properties without Certificate of Compliance. The ISD Director, upon being informed of the existence of a Vacant, Foreclosing or Foreclosed Property without a Certificate of Compliance, shall cause notice to issue to the Responsible Party of the status of said Property and shall order said Responsible Party to immediately obtain a Certificate of Compliance. If any Responsible Party fails to comply with said order, the ISD Director or agents thereof may enter the Property to inspect, and further may seek court orders to enter upon the premises to secure, clean and remove any pools of stagnant water.
- F. Expenses. The Responsible Party of a Vacant, Foreclosing or Foreclosed Property who fails to obtain a Certificate of Compliance as required herein, shall be liable to the City for expenses incurred by the City in securing such Property, for removing rubbish and overgrowth, and/or for abating stagnant pools of water. The ISD Director shall provide the Responsible Party with a written statement of all costs associated

with inspecting, securing and marking the Property, and removing rubbish or overgrowth, or abating stagnant pools of water. If the Responsible Party fails to pay or reimburse the City within seven days of notice of expenses, the City shall draw down upon the bond paid by the Responsible Party as required in section A (11), above. If there is no bond available, the ISD Director shall record the notice of claim in the Southern Essex Registry of Deeds (or the Land Court Department) forthwith, and shall have the right to file a civil action in the Northeast Division Housing Court to establish a lien on the Property for the balance due.

- G. Duty to maintain Property. No Responsible Party for a Vacant, Foreclosing, Foreclosed Property shall allow said Property to become or remain unsecured, or to contain an accumulation of rubbish, or to contain overgrowth, or to have a stagnant pool of water. If it appears that any vacant or foreclosing Property is unsecured, contains rubbish, overgrowth, or a stagnant pool of water, the ISD Director shall send written notification to the Responsible Party, requiring that the Responsible Party promptly secure the Property, remove the rubbish or overgrowth, or abate the stagnant pool of water.
- H. If the Responsible Party fails to comply with any order issued pursuant to Section 13, the ISD Director may immediately seek to obtain the proceeds secured by the bond filed pursuant to Section 13:00 A (4) herein and shall enter upon the premises and cause the Property to be inspected, secured and marked, and further may seek court orders to enter upon the premises to secure, clean, and remove any rubbish or overgrowth, or abate any pools of stagnant water or otherwise enforce the sanitary code.
- I. Nuisance referral. All unsecured Vacant, Foreclosing or Foreclosed Properties shall be immediately referred to the ISD Director for a determination relative to whether the Property is a nuisance or dangerous pursuant to M.G.L. c. 139 and procedures promulgated thereunder.
- J. Notice. Notices required pursuant to this section shall be served in one of the following manners:
 - (1) Personally on any Responsible Party, or on the contact person specified by such Responsible Party pursuant to Section 13:00A(2); or
 - (2) Left at the last and usual place of abode of any Responsible Party who is an individual; or
 - (3) Sent by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested, to the principal place of business within or without the Commonwealth of any Responsible Party who is an entity, if such principal place of business is known; or,
 - (4) The contact person identified by such Responsible Party pursuant to Section 13:00A (2); or

(5) Sent by certified or registered mail, return receipt requested, to any contact person specified by the Responsible Party pursuant to Section 13:00 A (2), at the address specified by the Responsible Party pursuant to Section 13:00 A (2).

- K. Enforcement: violations and penalties. Failure to comply with any provision of Section 13:00 shall be punished by a fine of \$300 pursuant to M.G.L. c. 40 § 21D, with each day of violation constituting a separate offense.

Section 13:00 may also be enforced by civil, criminal process or noncriminal process, including injunctive relief. The ISD Director and Fire Chief shall be enforcing persons for purposes of this section.

SECTION 14:00 **PREVENTING UNNECESSARY VACANCIES OF CERTAIN FORECLOSED RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN THE CITY OF LYNN**

- A. Post-Foreclosure Occupant Eviction. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, a Foreclosure Sale Purchaser shall not evict an Occupant except for just cause, unless a binding purchase and sale agreement has been executed for a bona fide third party to purchase the Residential Property from said Foreclosure Sale Purchaser.
- B. Penalties. Any Foreclosure Sale Purchaser who evicts or attempts to evict Occupants in violation of any provisions of this Ordinance shall be punished by a fine of not less than \$300 dollars. Each eviction done in violation of this Ordinance constitutes a separate offense.
- C. Jurisdiction. The Lynn District Court, Essex Superior Court, and Northeast Housing Courts shall have jurisdiction over an action arising from this Ordinance and shall have jurisdiction in equity to restrain any such violation. No Occupant shall be evicted in violation of any provision of this Ordinance. It shall be a defense to eviction that the Foreclosure Sale Purchaser attempted to evict an Occupant in violation of any provision of this Ordinance.
- D. Conflict of Laws. Any provision of federal law relating to rental units owned, operated or subsidized by the federal government which are inconsistent with or contrary to the provisions of this Ordinance shall supersede the provisions of this Ordinance. Where not inconsistent, the provisions of federal law shall apply in conjunction with the provisions of this Ordinance.
- E. Exemption. This Section shall not apply if the Foreclosure Sale Purchaser is a lender of Mortgage Loans headquartered in the Commonwealth, is not a subsidiary of an entity headquartered outside the Commonwealth, and has recorded at the Southern Essex Registry of Deeds five (5) or fewer Foreclosure Deeds for Residential Properties in the City in the prior calendar year.

SECTION 15:00 INDEMNIFICATION

The City of Lynn shall indemnify, hold harmless and defend (including payment of reasonable attorney fees and costs) the Mediation Program Manager and their mediators, officers, administrators, agents, servants and employees, from any and all claims against the Mediation Program Manager and their mediators, officers, administrators, agents, servants and employees, arising out of their service as Mediation Program Manager pursuant to the terms of this Ordinance, including, but not limited to, any challenges that may be made as to the legality of or implementation of this Ordinance. Excluded however are any claims against the Mediation Program Manager and their mediators, officers, administrators, agent, servants and employees for their sole negligence, willful or wrongful act or omission, or an act or omission constituting gross negligence.

SECTION 16:00 INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES

All Ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION 17:00 TIME OF TAKING EFFECT

This ordinance shall take effect thirty-one (31) days after its final adoption as advertised.

SECTION 18:00 SEVERABILITY

In the event any part of this ordinance shall be held invalid, such invalidity shall not invalidate the whole ordinance but the remaining provisions of this ordinance shall not be affected thereby.