



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE
MAYOR

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

June 24, 2010

Honorable Alderman Dennis Sullivan
City Hall
93 Highland Avenue
Somerville, MA 02143

Re: Board Order #188647
Foreclosed Properties

Alderman Sullivan:

Please be advised that OSPCD is in receipt of your Board Order #188647 dated January 19, 2010 which requests that the Executive Director of the Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development develop procedures for determining who owns foreclosed properties within the city and to ensure that said properties are maintained in such a manner so that they do not pose a safety hazard nor inflict blight to the surrounding area.

In response, OSPCD has been working with Somerville Community Corporation, Community Action Agency of Somerville and the Cambridge and Somerville Legal Services to address this concern. As you know, during the highpoint of the real estate boom, mortgages were bundled together and sold in the secondary market to large investment and insurance firms making it extremely difficult and complicated to determine the actual mortgagor of record. When the real estate bubble burst in 2007, many homes were threatened with foreclosure and ultimately ownership interests reverted back to these larger firms.

The City of Boston passed an ordinance that required all mortgagors of foreclosed upon properties to register their information with the City by creating a central registry. This provides Boston with appropriate contact information on hand to enforce the issues around blighted and abandoned properties. The City of Somerville does not yet have such an ordinance in place. In absence of such a registry, the Housing Division has secured a Bankers & Tradesmen's Foreclosure Database and made that available to the Inspectional Services Division. ISD is using this information to monitor properties.

Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Philip J. Ercolini, Director of Housing at 617-625-6600 x2565.

Respectfully,

MONICA R. LAMBOY
Executive Director

