



The Blue Grass Trust
for Historic Preservation

June 13, 2012

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Mr. David Jarvis, Director
Division of Code Enforcement
101 East Vine Street, Suite 100
Lexington, KY 40507

Dear Director Jarvis,

Monday, June 11, was to have been a day when an historic house at 412 West Third received a second chance. Thanks to your liens and the government's decision to foreclose, the house was slated for sale by the Master Commissioner. The Blue Grass Trust staff was contacted by several individuals who intended to bid on this property. Neighbor, Sue Ellen D'Angelo initiated vine clean up on the front façade to encourage interest as the sale date approached. Sadly, the owner, Marcelle Payton, apparently fulfilled all of her financial obligations with a check delivered to the government on June 8th. Unfortunately, her payment of the tax liens and code enforcement liens does nothing to repair her years of neglecting the property.

This property has been empty for over a decade. The property will continue to deteriorate as this absentee owner ignores her own investment and the community she unfortunately entered. It has taken years to get this property on the Master Commissioner list and I am certain more years will pass before the opportunity will arise again. Your office plays a critical role in stabilizing buildings to insure their longevity.

I am writing now in my capacity as the President of the Blue Grass Trust for Historic Preservation and asking your office to immediately undertake new inspections of this property and issue applicable notices of violation for all matters requiring such notices. Vine growth is extensive on the rear of the property, windows are broken and open to vandalism, fascia and soffit damage is extensive and roof conditions appear to be deteriorating in the Google earth satellite imagery.

In addition, we ask you to conduct the same extensive inspection of the property at 445 West Third St. It too is owned by Ms. Payton and has delinquent taxes and multiple liens but a foreclosure sale is not imminent as the foreclosure action was only filed in April of this year. The rear of the building is loosely protected by a blue tarp, the roof is failing and it also has fascia and soffit damage.

These two stunning masonry homes face dire consequences if the government fails to take immediate and aggressive action. To the extent you are within your legal rights, we believe you should undertake formal action to "mothball" both of these properties immediately. Mothballing would tarp the roofs and secure the structures from unwanted rodents and vandals. The Blue Grass Trust would proudly partner with you to help with efforts to mothball.

Our office and the members of the Historic Preservation Commission have asked for an urgent meeting with city officials who can implement change to an inspection, code enforcement, and legal system that clearly do not work together.

We sincerely thank you for your efforts to date, but the challenge now is to maintain pressure on an absentee and uncaring landowner and insure the survival of important housing stock in our community.

Sincerely,

Linda Carroll

cc: Mayor Jim Gray
Council Member Chris Ford
Derek Paulsen
BGT Board Members
John Rhorer, Chair, Historic Preservation Commission