

ORDINANCE 2018-04

BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN
COUNTY OF MERCER
STATE OF NEW JERSEY

AMENDING CHAPTER 14, ENTITLED “PROPERTY MAINTENANCE”, Section 14-12, ENTITLED “ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES”, OF THE *REVISED GENERAL ORDINANCES OF THE BOROUGH OF HIGHTSTOWN*

WHEREAS, the Housing Inspector, in coordination with the Construction/Zoning Official recommends certain changes to the Property Maintenance ordinance of the Borough; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and Council of Hightstown Borough have determined that said revision to the Property Maintenance ordinance is required pursuant to the request.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Hightstown as follows:

1. Section 1. The following subsections of Chapter 14, “Property Maintenance”, of the *Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Hightstown* are hereby amended and supplemented as follows (deletions in ~~strikeout~~ text, additions underlined):

Section 14-12

ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

14-12.1 Enforcement officers. The Construction Official, Fire Inspector, Fire Official, Fire Chief, Electrical Inspector, Plumbing Inspector, Housing Inspector, Health Officer or his/her designee, Health Department, all police officers and all municipal officials referenced in Section 14-10(f) of the Borough Code are authorized enforcement officers for the purposes of enforcing the provisions of this code. This Chapter shall also be enforced by the Code Enforcement Officer, whose position is hereby created, for the sole purpose of enforcing the provisions of this Chapter. The Code Enforcement Officer shall receive such salary as provided by Ordinance and shall be appointed by the Borough Council for a term as specified in the Resolution of Appointment.

14-12.2 Procedure. Except as otherwise set forth herein, whenever any enforcement officer determines, after appropriate **investigation**, that there exists a violation of any provision of this chapter, he or she shall give written notice of such alleged violation to the person or persons responsible therefor. Such notice shall include a statement of the reasons for its issuance, and shall be served upon the owner or occupant of the premises, or the agent of either. Notice shall be deemed to be properly served if a copy thereof is served upon such person personally or sent by certified mail or registered mail to his last known address, or posted in a conspicuous place in or about the premises affected by the notice. Such notice shall state that unless, within five calendar days from service of the notice, the condition complained of is abated, a municipal court summons will be issued and/or the Borough will undertake to abate the violation and place a lien on the property as hereinafter provided. A copy of the Notice shall be provided to the Borough Clerk.

14-12.3 Special Procedure in Emergency Conditions. Whenever the enforcement officer finds that an emergency exists which requires immediate attention to protect the health or safety of the public, he or she may, without notice, issue and order reciting the existence of such an emergency and requiring that

such action be taken as he or she deems necessary to meet the emergency. Notwithstanding any other provisions in this chapter, such order shall be effective immediately. Any person to whom such order is directed shall comply therewith immediately, but upon petition to the enforcement officer, shall be afforded a hearing as soon as possible. In the event that the order is disregarded by the property owner or person to whom the order is directed, the enforcement officer shall have the right to notify the Borough Clerk for the purpose of instituting immediate remedial action, the cost of which shall result in a lien on the premises. After such hearing, the enforcement officer shall continue such order in effect, or modify or withdraw it.

14-12.4 Violations and Penalties.

- a. **General Penalty.** Except as otherwise set forth herein, any person who shall violate any of the provisions of this chapter shall be subject to penalties as set forth in Section 1-5 of the *Revised General Ordinances of the Borough of Hightstown*. Each violation of any of the provisions of this chapter and each day that such violation shall continue shall be deemed to be a separate and distinct offense.

b. **Payable Offenses.**

14-5.1 Hazards and Structural Integrity.

14-5.2 Appearance.

14-5.4 Sidewalks, Driveways, Walkways and Entrance Stairways.

14-5.5 Hedges, Brush and Grass.

First offense \$75

Second offense \$150 Court appearance required

Subsequent Offenses Not to Exceed \$2,000 Court appearance required

14-6.4 Litter, Debris and Garbage.

14-6.5 Recyclables.

14-6.6 Open or Overflowing Waste Disposal Bins.

14-6.7 Harboring of Rodents.

14-6.9 Construction Sites.

First offense \$50

Second offense \$100 Court appearance required

Subsequent Offenses Not to Exceed \$2,000 Court appearance required

14-9.1 Windows.

14-9.2 Store fronts.

14-9.3 Reconstruction.

14-9.4 Awnings and marquees.

14-9.5 Signs, Light Stanchions and Poles.

First offense **\$100**

Second offense **\$200 Court appearance required**

Subsequent Offenses **Not to Exceed \$2,500 Court appearance required**

b.c. Lien to be Placed on Property. In addition to the foregoing, and all other remedies available to the Borough, the Borough Treasurer, upon appropriate notification from the Mayor and Council and appropriate certification from the enforcement officer, shall place a lien on any property determined by the enforcement officer to be in violation of the provisions of this code, in the amount of any and all administrative expenses and any and all actual expenditures for work necessary in order to maintain the property and/or abate the violation, including the cost of removal of any offensive construction materials, refuse, hazards, overhanging objects or any other offending physical object. The lien placed upon such lands shall be added to and become and form a part of the taxes next to be assessed and levied upon such lands, the same to bear interest at the same rate as taxes, and shall be collected and enforced by the same officers and in the same manner as taxes. Costs shall be in addition to any penalties imposed for any violation of this Chapter.

Section 2. This Ordinance shall become effective immediately upon final passage and publication in accordance with the law.

Section 3. All other Ordinances or parts of Ordinances inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

Section 4. In the event that any portion of this Ordinance is found to be invalid for any reason by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such judgment shall be limited in its effect only to that portion of the Ordinance actually adjudged to be invalid, and the remaining portions of this Ordinance shall be deemed severable therefrom and shall not be affected.

Introduction:

Adoption:

ATTEST:

DEBRA L. SOPRONYI
MUNICIPAL CLERK

LAWRENCE D. QUATTRONE
MAYOR