



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Terrence Murphy

Murphy's Zombie-killer law takes effect

TERRENCE MURPHY December 27, 2016

| ISSUE: **ZOMBIE HOMES, ZOMBIE PROPERTIES**



CARMEL, NY – This past Spring, State Senator Terrence Murphy teamed up with Senator Jeff Klein of the Bronx, to bring attention to the growing zombie invasion within the 40th Senate District. Zombie homes, like the one they stood in front of in Carmel, have been terrorizing neighborhoods and frustrating homeowners for years. Now, a new law is in effect that will streamline the foreclosure process so local blights can become thriving pieces of local neighborhoods.

“Earlier this year we unveiled a report showing a depreciation of more than six million in property values due to these so called zombie properties,” Senator Murphy said. “These properties not only prove to devalue neighboring parcels but pose real dangers to our kids. The new laws we passed finally hold big banks accountable to properly care for and maintain the properties under their ownership instead of letting them deteriorate into zombie properties.”

Under new legislation approved earlier this year banks and mortgage servicing companies will be required to maintain any houses that are abandoned before or while the lenders are foreclosing on them. Furthermore, the new laws established a daily fine of \$500 if banks do not comply with new reporting requirements. The law also includes an expedited foreclosure process for abandoned properties.

Local officials applauded the new laws.

Yorktown Supervisor Michael Grace said, “New York State must do everything possible to protect the property value of hardworking taxpayers. Yorktown has its fair share of zombie properties that only prove to be a public nuisance. Hopefully these new laws will provide the support local municipalities need in addressing them.”

Somers Supervisor Rick Morrissey said, “Calling banks to task on maintaining these properties is good for the community and makes an investment in the property which in turn makes it more marketable. This will ensure it is sold to someone who will not only maintain the property but become a part of our community. Under my administration, Somers has already strengthened its own property maintenance laws and calls the banks to task. These new laws will help us in these efforts.”

Carmel Supervisor Ken Schmitt said, "I would like to personally thank Senator Murphy for his efforts in implementing this new law to address the proliferation of zombie homes. Sadly, many homeowners were not able to keep up with their mortgage payments due to the financial recession resulting in the loss of their homes. The new law allows Carmel to hire a contractor to clean up and maintain the property without impacting the town wide operating budget. This is definitely a win-win for the Town and any neighborhood with neglected properties as the abandoned property would be cleaned up at no additional cost to local taxpayers."

Brewster Trustee Erin Meagher said, "This will help revitalize our neighborhoods. Residents have watched homes languish by gross neglect over the past several years creating hazards and bringing down property values. The accountability with this new law will ensure the hard working New Yorkers aren't plagued by neglect and abandonment anymore."

To report zombie properties to New York State residents are encouraged to utilize the new hotline: 1-800-342-3736.