

ORDINANCE NO. 7,458–N.S.

REPEALING AND REENACTING BERKELEY MUNICIPAL CODE SECTIONS 23C.08.010, 23C.08.020 AND 23C.08.030, AND ADDING SECTION 23C.08.035 REGULATING DEMOLITION AND ELIMINATION OF DWELLING UNITS

BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Berkeley as follows:

Section 1. That Section 23C.08.010 of the Berkeley Municipal Code is repealed and reenacted to read as follows:

23C.08.010 Demolition or Elimination of Dwelling Units – General Requirement

- A. No Dwelling Unit or units may be eliminated or demolished except as authorized by the provisions of the chapter.
- B. The Board may approve a Use Permit for the elimination or demolition of dwelling units only if, in addition to any other findings required by this Ordinance, it finds that the elimination of the dwelling units would not be materially detrimental to the housing needs and public interest of the affected neighborhood and the City.
- C. Demolition of buildings containing a single dwelling unit and buildings constructed after June 1980 shall not be subject to the findings set forth in Section 23C.08.020.A but shall be subject to subdivisions B, C, and D of Section 23C.08.020.

Section 2. That Section 23C.08.020 of the Berkeley Municipal Code is repealed and reenacted to read as follows:

23C.08.020 Elimination of Dwelling Units through Demolition

- A. The Board may approve a Use Permit to demolish a building constructed prior to June 1980 on a property containing two or more dwelling units if it makes the findings required by the foregoing section, and either:
 - 1. The building containing the units is hazardous or unusable and is infeasible to repair; or
 - 2. The building containing the units will be moved to a different location within the City of Berkeley with no net loss of units and no change in the affordability levels of the units; or
 - 3. The demolition is necessary to permit construction of special housing needs facilities such as, but not limited to, childcare centers and affordable housing developments that serve the greater good of the entire community; or

4. The demolition is necessary to permit construction approved pursuant to this Chapter of at least the same number of dwelling units.

When a project is approved under this paragraph, the project applicant shall be required to pay a fee for each unit demolished to mitigate the impact of the loss of affordable housing in the City of Berkeley. The amount of the fee shall be set by resolution of the City Council.

In the case of a unit with a tenant at the time of demolition, the provisions of Section 23C.08.020.C apply and the impact fee is due when that tenant vacates the unit.

In lieu of paying the impact fee, the project applicant may provide a designated unit in the new project at a below market rate to a qualifying household in perpetuity. The affordability level of the below market rent and the income level of the qualifying household shall be set by resolution of the City Council. The project applicant shall enter a regulatory agreement with the City of Berkeley to provide for the provision of any such in lieu units.

B. Notwithstanding Subdivision (A), demolition will not be allowed if the building was removed from the rental market under the Ellis Act during the preceding five (5) years or there have been verified cases of harassment or threatened or actual illegal eviction during the immediately preceding three years.

Where allegations of harassment or threatened or actual illegal eviction are in dispute, either party may request a hearing before a Rent Board Hearing Examiner, who will provide an assessment of the evidence and all available documentation to the Zoning Adjustments Board, which shall determine whether harassment or threatened or actual illegal eviction occurred.

C. If the units in a building to be demolished under subdivision (A) are occupied, the following requirements shall apply.

1. Except as set forth in paragraph (2) below:

a. The applicant shall provide all sitting tenants notice of the application to demolish the building no later than the date it is submitted to the City, including notice of their rights under Chapter 13.76.

b. The applicant shall provide assistance with moving expenses equivalent to those set forth in Chapter 13.84.

c. The applicant shall subsidize the rent differential for a comparable replacement unit, in the same neighborhood if feasible, until new units are ready for occupancy. Funding for the rent differential shall be guaranteed in a manner approved by the City.

2. An applicant under this Chapter who proposes to construct a 100% affordable housing project shall provide relocation benefits that conform to the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended and the California Relocation Act (Government Code sections 7260 et seq.).

3. Except as set forth in paragraph (4) below, sitting tenants who are displaced as a result of demolition shall be provided the right of refusal to move into the new building; and tenants of units that are demolished shall have the right of first refusal to rent new below-market rate units designated to replace the units that were demolished, at the rent that would have applied if they had remained in place, as long as their tenancy continues. Income restrictions shall not apply to displaced tenants.

4. In cases where an applicant under this Chapter has constructed a 100% affordable housing project, sitting tenants who are displaced as a result of demolition and who desire to return to the newly constructed building will be granted a right of first refusal subject to their ability to meet income qualifications and other applicable eligibility requirements when the new units are ready for occupancy.

5. The provisions of this section shall not apply to tenants who move in after the application for demolition is submitted to the City provided that the owner informs each prospective tenant about the proposed demolition and that demolition constitutes good cause for eviction.

D. Notwithstanding anything in Title 23 to the contrary, but subject to any applicable requirements of the Landmarks Preservation Ordinance (BMC Chapter 3.24), accessory buildings of any size, including, but not limited to, garages, carports and sheds, but not including any structure containing a lawfully established dwelling unit, which serves and is located on the same lot as a lawful residential use, may be demolished by right.

Section 3. That Section 23C.08.030 of the Berkeley Municipal Code is repealed and reenacted to read as follows:

23C.08.030 Elimination of Dwelling Units and Accessory Dwelling Units through Conversion and Change of Use

A. The Board may approve a Use Permit for the elimination of a dwelling unit through combination with another dwelling unit for purposes of occupancy by a single household if it finds that:

1. The existing number of dwelling units exceeds the number permitted by the maximum residential density applicable to the District where the subject building is located; and
2. One of the affected dwelling units has been occupied by the applicant's household as its principal place of residence for no less than two years prior to the

date of the application and none of the affected units is currently occupied by a tenant.

B. Notwithstanding Subdivision (A), demolition will not be allowed if the building was removed from the rental market under the Ellis Act during the preceding five (5) years or there have been verified cases of harassment or threatened or actual illegal eviction during the immediately preceding three years. Where allegations of harassment or threatened or actual illegal eviction are in dispute, either party may request a hearing before a Rent Board Hearing Examiner, who will provide an assessment of the evidence and all available documentation to the Zoning Officer or Zoning Adjustments Board, which shall determine whether harassment or threatened or actual illegal eviction occurred.

C. In the event a unit eliminated pursuant to subdivision (A) is not occupied by the applicant's household for at least two consecutive years from the date of elimination, the affected unit must be restored to separate status. This requirement shall be implemented by a condition of approval and a notice of limitation on the property, acceptable to the City, which provides that if the owner's household does not occupy the unit for at least two years from the date of elimination the affected units must either be restored as separate dwelling units and the vacant unit(s) offered for rent within six months or the owner must pay a fee of \$75,000 in 2013 dollars, adjusted in May of each year according to the Consumer Price Index for the San Francisco Bay Area, which shall be deposited into the City's Housing Trust Fund. The City may exempt an applicant from the two year residency requirement in the event of an unforeseeable life change that requires relocation.

D. In cases where elimination of a dwelling unit reduces the number of units in a building to four (4), the applicant shall record a notice of limitation against the subject property that the limitation on eviction of tenants under Section 13.76.130.A.9.i(iii) shall continue to apply until such time as the building is demolished or sufficient units are added or restored such that the building contains at least five (5) units.

E. Alternatively, the Zoning Officer may issue an AUP for a conversion which eliminates a dwelling unit if he/she finds that the conversion of the building will restore or brings the building closer to the original number of dwelling units that was present at the time it was first constructed, provided the conversion meets the requirements of A.2., B. C. and D. of this section.

F. The Board may approve a Use Permit for a change of use to a community care or a child care facility which eliminates a dwelling unit if it finds that such use is in conformance with the regulations of the District in which it is located.

G. The Board may approve a Use Permit for the elimination of a dwelling unit through combination with another dwelling unit for the purpose of providing private bathrooms, kitchenettes, accessibility upgrades, and/or seismic safety upgrades to Single-Residential Occupancy (SRO) Rooms in residential developments undergoing a publicly-funded rehabilitation. H. Notwithstanding the general Use Permit requirement under 23C.08.010,

a lawfully established accessory dwelling unit that is not a controlled rental unit may be eliminated subject to the issuance of a Zoning Certificate when the re-conversion restores the original single family use of the main building or lot, provided that no tenant is evicted.

Section 4. That Section 23C.08.035 is added to the Berkeley Municipal Code to read as follows:

23C.08.035 Private Right of Action

Any affected tenant may bring a private action for injunctive and/or compensatory relief against any applicant and/or owner to prevent or remedy a violation of Sections 23C.08.020 or 23C.08.030. In any such action a prevailing plaintiff may recover reasonable attorney's fees.

Section 5. In adopting these amendments, it is the City Council's intention to permit demolition of existing dwelling units constructed prior to June 1980 only if the impacts of doing so are mitigated as set forth in this ordinance. Accordingly: (1) if any provision of this ordinance is determined to be invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction the entire ordinance shall be deemed automatically repealed, null and void and no force or effect; and (2) if a use permit or administrative use permit condition implementing any of the mitigations required by this ordinance is determined to be invalid or unenforceable by a court of competent jurisdiction, then the entire use permit or administrative use permit which it conditions shall be deemed to automatically invalid as a consequence, and shall be null and void and of no further force or effect.

Section 6. Copies of this Ordinance shall be posted for two days prior to adoption in the display case located near the walkway in front of Old City Hall, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way. Within fifteen days of adoption, copies of this Ordinance shall be filed at each branch of the Berkeley Public Library and the title shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation.

At a regular meeting of the Council of the City of Berkeley held on February 9, 2016, this Ordinance was passed to print and ordered published by posting by the following vote:

Ayes: Anderson, Arreguin, Capitelli, Droste, Maio, Moore, Wengraf, Worthington and Bates.

Noes: None.

Absent: None.

