

**TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD
BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA**

ORDINANCE NO. _____

AN ORDINANCE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD, BUCKS COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, REPEALING CHAPTER 152, ARTICLE II, REGISTRATION OF VACANT PROPERTIES, OF THE CODE OF THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD and REPLACING THE REPEALED CHAPTER WITH A NEW CHAPTER TO BE ENTITLED, “REGISTRATION OF FORECLOSURE MORTGAGES AND VACANT PROPERTY”; PROVIDING FOR PURPOSE, INTENT AND APPLICABILITY OF THE ORDINANCE REQUIRING THE REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF CERTAIN REAL PROPERTY BY MORTGAGEES AND VACANT PROPERTY BY OWNERS; PROVIDING FOR PENALTIES AND ENFORCEMENT, AND THE REGULATION, LIMITATION AND REDUCTION OF REGISTRABLE REAL PROPERTY WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD, TO REPEAL INCONSISTENT PROVISIONS, AND TO ESTABLISH SEVERABILITY AND EFFECTIVE DATE

WHEREAS, the Township of Lower Makefield, Bucks County (“Township”) is a Township of the second class, organized and existing in accordance with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; and

WHEREAS, the Township, in the exercise of its corporate powers, has the authority to enact, amend, repeal and establish ordinances and regulations designed to protect the public health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of the incorporate area of Township and maintain a high quality of life for the citizens of the Township through the maintenance of structures and properties in the Township ; and

WHEREAS, the Township recognizes that certain real properties subject to foreclosure action or foreclosed on and/or vacant properties (hereinafter referred to as “Registrable Properties”) which are located throughout the Township lead to a decline in community and property values; create nuisances; lead to a general decrease in neighborhood and community aesthetic; create conditions that invite criminal activity; and foster an unsafe and unhealthy environment; and

WHEREAS, the Township has already adopted property maintenance codes to regulate building standards for the exterior of structures and the condition of the property as a whole; and

WHEREAS, the Township recognizes that, in the best interest of the public health, safety, and welfare, a more regulated method is needed to discourage property owners and mortgagees from allowing their real properties to be abandoned, neglected or left unsupervised; and

WHEREAS, the Township has a vested interest in protecting neighborhoods against decay caused by Registrable Property and concludes that it is in the best interests of the health, safety,

and welfare of its citizens and residents to impose registration requirements of Registrable Property located within the Township to discourage property owners and mortgagees from allowing their real properties to be abandoned, neglected or left unsupervised.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it ORDAINED and ENACTED as follows:

I. GENERAL PROVISIONS

A. The Township finds that the implementation of the following changes and additions will assist the Township in protecting neighborhoods from the negative impact and conditions that occur as a result of vacancy, absentee ownership, and lack of compliance with existing Township regulations and laws.

1. That the foregoing “WHEREAS” clauses as listed above are hereby ratified and confirmed as being true and correct and are hereby made a specific part of this Ordinance upon the adoption hereof.

2. The Township does hereby amend the Township’s Code of Ordinances by repealing in its entirety Chapter 152, Article II, “Registration of Vacant Properties,” and replacing said Chapter with a new chapter to be entitled “Registration of Foreclosure Mortgages and Vacant Property” as follows

II. ARTICLE II REGISTRATION OF VACANT PROPERTIES

SECTION 152-9 SHORT TITLE

This Article may be cited as “Registration of Foreclosure Mortgages and Vacant Property” or “Vacant Properties Ordinance.”

SECTION 152-10 PURPOSE AND INTENT.

It is the purpose and intent of the Township to establish a process to address the deterioration, crime, and decline in value of Township neighborhoods caused by property with foreclosing or foreclosed mortgages located within the Township, and to identify, regulate, limit and reduce the number of these properties located within the Township. It has been determined that Owner-occupied structures are generally better maintained when compared to vacant structures, even with a diligent off-site property Owner. Vacant structures or structures owned by individuals who are economically strained and unable to meet their mortgage obligations are often not properly or diligently maintained, which contribute to blight, declined property values, and have a negative impact on social perception of the residential areas where they are located. It is the Township’s further intent to establish a registration program as a mechanism to help protect neighborhoods from becoming blighted through the lack of adequate maintenance of properties that are in Foreclosure or Foreclosed, and to provide a mechanism to avert foreclosure actions through timely intervention, education, or counseling of property Owners.

SECTION 152-11 DEFINITIONS

The following words, terms, and phrases, when used in this chapter, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning.

Default shall mean that the mortgagor has not complied with the terms of the mortgage on the property, or the promissory note, or other evidence of the debt, referred to in the mortgage or deed of trust.

Enforcement Officer shall mean any law enforcement officer, building official, zoning inspector, code enforcement officer, fire inspector, building inspector, or other person authorized by the to enforce the applicable code(s).

Evidence of Vacancy shall mean any condition that on its own, or combined with other conditions present, would lead a reasonable person to believe that the property is vacant. Such conditions may include, but are not limited to: overgrown and/or dead vegetation; past due utility notices and/or disconnected utilities; accumulation of trash junk or debris; abandoned vehicles, auto parts and/or materials; the absence of furnishings and/or personal items consistent with habitation or occupancy; the presence of an unsanitary, stagnant swimming pool; the accumulation of newspapers, circulars, flyers and/or mail; statements by neighbors, passers-by, delivery agents or government agents; and/or the presence of boards over doors, windows or other openings in violation of applicable code.

Foreclosure or Foreclosure Action shall mean the process by which a property, placed as security for a real estate loan, is sold at public sale to satisfy the debt if the borrower defaults. A Foreclosure or Foreclosure Action is deemed commenced upon a Mortgagee's filing of a Notice of Lis Pendens or similar evidence of Default.

Mortgagee shall mean the creditor, including but not limited to, trustees; mortgage servicing companies; lenders in a mortgage agreement; any agent, servant, or employee of the creditor; any successor in interest; or any assignee of the creditor's rights, interests or obligations under the mortgage agreement; or any other person or entity with the legal right to foreclose on the Real Property, excluding governmental entities as the assignee or owner.

Owner shall mean every person, entity, or Mortgagee, who alone or severally with others, has legal or equitable title to any Real Property as defined by this Chapter; has legal care, charge, or control of any such property; is in possession or control of any such property; and/or is vested with possession or control of any such property. The Property Manager shall not be considered the Owner.

Property Manager shall mean any party or entity designated by the Owner or Mortgagee as responsible for inspecting, maintaining and securing the property as required in this Chapter.

Real Property shall mean any residential or commercial land and/or buildings, leasehold improvements and anything affixed to the land, or portion thereof identified by a property parcel identification number, located in the Township limits.

Registrable Property shall mean:

- (a) Any Real Property located in the Township , whether Vacant or occupied, that is (i) subject of a Foreclosure Action; (ii) has been the subject of a Foreclosure Action and a judgment has been entered but the property has not yet been sold; (iii) has been the subject of a Foreclosure sale and title was transferred to the Mortgagee or an affiliate entity of the Mortgagee; or (iv) transferred to the Mortgagee or an affiliated entity of the Mortgagee under a deed in lieu of Foreclosure or Foreclosure sale. The designation of a Real Property as a Registrable Property pursuant to this subsection shall remain in place until such time as the property is sold to a non-related bona fide purchaser in an arm's length transaction or the Foreclosure Action has been dismissed; or
- (b) Any property that is vacant for more than thirty (30) days or any cancellation of Utility or Service, whichever occurs first.

Registry shall mean a web-based electronic database of searchable Real Property records, used by the TOWNSHIP to allow Mortgagees and Owners the opportunity to register properties and pay applicable fees as required in this Chapter.

Semi-Annual Registration shall mean six (6) months from the date of the first action that requires registration, as determined by the Township, or its designee, and every subsequent six (6) months. The date of the initial registration may be different than the date of the first action that required registration.

Utilities and Services shall mean any utility and/or service that is essential for a building to be habitable and/or perform a service necessary to comply with all Township codes. This includes, but is not limited to, electrical, gas, water, sewer, trash service, lawn maintenance, and pool maintenance.

Vacant shall mean any parcel of land in the Township that contains any building or structure to be used as a residence or for commercial or industrial purposes that is not lawfully occupied or used for its accustomed and ordinary purpose, as evidenced by conditions set forth in the definition of "*Evidence of Vacancy*". In the case of the use of residential property, "used for its accustomed and ordinary purpose" means as a place of abode.

SECTION 152-12 APPLICABILITY AND JURISDICTION

This Chapter applies to all Real Property within the Township.

SECTION 152-13 ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGISTRY

Pursuant to the provisions of this Chapter, Sections 152-14 and 152-15, the Township or its designee, shall establish a registry cataloging each Registrable Property within the Township, containing the information required by this Chapter.

SECTION 152-14 INSPECTION AND REGISTRATION OF REAL PROPERTY UNDER FORECLOSURE

- (a) Any Mortgagee who holds a mortgage on Real Property located within the Township shall perform an inspection of the property upon Default by the mortgagor as evidenced by the filing of a Foreclosure Action, Lis Pendens, or Notice of Trustee’s Sale. Inspection means a careful examination of the property to determine occupancy and if it is in compliance with all applicable building, maintenance, and housing codes.
- (b) Property inspected pursuant to subsection (a) above that remains in Foreclosure shall be inspected every thirty (30) days by the Mortgagee or Mortgagee’s designee. If an inspection shows a change in the property’s occupancy status, the Mortgagee shall, within ten (10) days of that inspection, update the occupancy status of the property registration with the Township.
- (c) Within ten (10) days of the date any Mortgagee institutes a Foreclosure Action, the Mortgagee shall register the Real Property with the Township Registry, and, at the time of registration, indicate whether the property is Vacant, and if so shall designate in writing a Property Manager to inspect, maintain, and secure the Real Property subject to the mortgage under a Foreclosure Action. Separate registration is required for each property under a Foreclosure Action, regardless of whether it is occupied or vacant.
 - a. Mortgagees who have existing Registrable Property on the effective date of this ordinance have 30 calendar days from the effective date to register the property as indicated in this section. Separate registration is required for each property, whether it is vacant or occupied.
- (d) Registration pursuant to this section shall contain the name of the mortgagee and the mortgage servicer, the direct mailing address of both parties, a direct contact name and telephone number for both parties, an e-mail address for both parties, the folio or tax number, and the name, 24-hour contact telephone number, and email of the Property Manager responsible for the security and maintenance of the property.
- (e) At the time of initial registration each registrant shall pay a non-refundable Semi-Annual Registration fee in the amount established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors for each property. Subsequent non-refundable Semi-Annual renewal registrations of properties and fees in the amount established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors are due within ten (10) days of the expiration of the previous registration. Said fees shall be used to offset the costs of: (1) registration and registration enforcement, (2) code

enforcement and mitigation related to Defaulted properties, (3) post-closing counseling and Foreclosure intervention limited to Owner-occupied persons in Default, which may not include cash and mortgage modification assistance, and (4) for any related purposes as may be adopted in the policy set forth in this Chapter. Said fees shall be deposited to a special account in the Township 's Department dedicated to the cost of implementation and enforcement of this Ordinance, and fulfilling the purpose and intent of this Chapter. None of the funds provided for in this section shall be utilized for the legal defense of Foreclosure Actions.

- (f) If the mortgage and/or servicing on a Registrable Property is sold or transferred, the new Mortgagee / Servicer is subject to all the terms of this Chapter. Within ten (10) days of the transfer, the new Mortgagee shall register the property, if not already registered, or update the existing registration. The previous Mortgagee(s) / Servicer(s) shall be obligated to provide notice of the requirements of this Article and Chapter to the new mortgagee/servicer and the previous Mortgagee(s) / Servicer(s) will not be released from the responsibility of paying all previous unpaid fees, fines, and penalties accrued during their involvement with the Registrable Property.
- (g) If the Mortgagee sells or transfers the Registrable Property in a non-arm's length transaction to a related entity or person, the transferee is subject to all the terms of this Chapter, *and the* previous Mortgagee(s) / Servicer(s) shall be obligated to provide notice of the requirements of this Article and Chapter to the transferee. Within ten (10) days of the transfer, the transferee shall register the property or update the existing registration. Any and all previous unpaid fees, fines, and penalties, regardless of who the Mortgagee was at the time registration was required, including, but not limited to, unregistered periods during the Foreclosure process, are the responsibility of the transferee and are due and payable with the updated registration. The previous Mortgagee will not be released from the responsibility of paying all previous unpaid fees, fines, and penalties accrued during that Mortgagee's involvement with the Foreclosed Property.
- (h) If the Foreclosing or Foreclosed Property is not registered, or the registration fee is not paid within thirty (30) days of when the registration or renewal is required pursuant to this section, a late fee equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the Semi-Annual Registration fee shall be charged for every thirty-day period (30), or portion thereof, the property is not registered and shall be due and payable with the registration.
- (i) This section shall also apply to properties that have been the subject of a foreclosure sale where title is transferred to the Mortgagee as well as any properties transferred to the Mortgagee under a deed in lieu of foreclosure or by any other legal means.
- (j) Properties subject to this section shall remain subject to the Semi-Annual Registration requirement, and the inspection, security, and maintenance standards of this section as long as the property remains Registrable Property.

- (k) Any person or corporation that has registered a property under this section must report any change of information contained in the registration within ten (10) days of the change to the Township.
- (l) Failure of the Mortgagee and/or property Owner of record to properly register or to modify the registration to reflect a change of circumstances as required by this ordinance is a violation of this Chapter and shall be subject to enforcement by any of the enforcement means available to the Township.
- (m) If any property is in violation of this Chapter the Township may take the necessary action to ensure compliance with and/or place a lien on the property for the cost of the outstanding obligation and any additional cost incurred to the property into compliance.
- (n) Properties registered as a result of this section are not required to be registered again pursuant to the Inspection and Registration of Vacant Property section.

SECTION 152- 15 INSPECTION AND REGISTRATION OF VACANT PROPERTY THAT IS NOT SUBJECT TO A MORTGAGE IN FORECLOSURE

- (a) Any Owner of Vacant property, as defined in this chapter, located within the Township shall within ten (10) days after the property becomes Vacant, perform an inspection of the property and register the Real Property with the Township Registry. Inspection means a careful examination of the property to determine occupancy and if it is in compliance with all applicable building, maintenance, and housing codes
 - i. Structures that are Vacant Property at the time of the adoption of this ordinance must register within fifteen (15) days of the date this ordinance takes effect.
- (b) Property inspected pursuant to subsection (a) above that remains Vacant shall be inspected every thirty (30) days by the Owner or the Owner’s designee.
 - i. Initial registration pursuant to this section shall contain at a minimum the name of the Owner, the mailing address of the Owner, e-mail address, and telephone number of the Owner, and if applicable, the name and telephone number of the Property Manager and said person’s address, e-mail address, and telephone number.
 - ii. For purposes of this chapter, the following shall also be applicable:
 - a. If the owner is a corporation, the registration statement shall provide the names and resident addresses of all officers and directors of the corporation and shall be accompanied by a copy of the most recent relevant filing with the Secretary of State;
 - b. If the owner is an estate, the registration statement shall provide the name and business address of the executor of the estate;

- c. If the owner is a trust, the registration statement shall provide the name and business address of all trustees, grantors and beneficiaries;
 - d. If the owner is a partnership, the registration statement shall provide the names and residence addresses of all partners with an ownership interest in the property of 10% or greater;
 - e. If the owner is any other form of unincorporated association, the registration statement shall provide the names and residence addresses of all partners with an ownership interest in the property of 10% or greater;
 - f. If the owner is an individual, the registration statement shall provide the name and residence address of that person.
- (c) At the time of initial registration each registrant shall pay a non-refundable Semi-Annual Registration fee in the amount established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors for each Vacant property. Subsequent non-refundable Semi-Annual renewal registrations of Vacant properties and fees in the amount established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors as established in accordance with the Housing Inspection Fee Schedule Resolution) are due within ten (10) days of the expiration of the previous registration. Said fees shall be used to offset the costs of: (1) registration and registration enforcement, (2) code enforcement and mitigation related to Vacant properties, and (3) for any related purposes as may be adopted in the policy set forth in this Chapter.
- (d) If the property is sold or transferred, the new Owner is subject to all the terms of this Chapter. Within ten (10) days of the transfer, the new Owner shall register the Vacant property, if not already registered, or update the existing registration. The previous Owner(s) will not be released from the responsibility of paying all previous unpaid fees, fines, and penalties accrued during that Owner's involvement with the Vacant property.
- (e) If the Vacant property is not registered, or the Semi-Annual Registration fee is not paid within thirty (30) days of when the registration or Semi-Annual Registration is required pursuant to this section, a late fee shall be equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the Semi-Annual Registration fee shall be charged for every thirty (30) day-period, or portion thereof, the property is not registered and shall be due and payable with the registration. This section shall apply to the initial registration and registrations required by subsequent Owners of the Vacant property.
- (f) Properties subject to this section shall remain subject to the Semi-Annual Registration requirement, and the inspection, security, and maintenance standards of this section as long as the property is Vacant.
- (g) Failure of the Owner to properly register or to modify the registration to reflect a change of circumstances as required by this ordinance is a violation of this Chapter and shall be subject to enforcement by any of the enforcement means available to the Township.

- (h) If any property is in violation of this Chapter the Township may take the necessary action to ensure compliance with and place a lien on the property for the cost of the outstanding obligation and any additional cost incurred to the property into compliance.
- (i) Properties registered as a result of this section are not required to be registered again pursuant to the Foreclosure mortgage property section.

SECTION 152-16 MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

- (a) Properties subject to this chapter shall be kept free of weeds, overgrown brush, dead vegetation, trash, junk, debris, building materials, any accumulation of newspaper circulars, flyers, notices, except those required by federal, state or local law, discarded personal items including, but not limited to, furniture, clothing, large and small appliances, printed material, or any other items that give the appearance that the property is abandoned.
- (b) Registrable Property shall be maintained free of graffiti or similar markings by removal or painting over with an exterior grade paint that matches the color of the exterior structure. Registrable Property shall be secured in an approved manner and in accordance with the most recent edition of the International Property Maintenance Code, which has been adopted by the Township. With the exception of Registrable Property damaged as a result of fire or other insurable loss, the registrant shall pay an additional fee as established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors for the boarding of doors, window, or other openings.
- (c) Front, side, and rear yards, including landscaping, of Registrable Property shall be maintained in accordance with the applicable code(s) at the time registration is required.
- (d) Registrable yard maintenance shall include, but not be limited to, grass, ground covers, bushes, shrubs, hedges or similar plantings, decorative rock or bark or artificial turf/sod. Acceptable maintenance of yards and/or landscape shall not include weeds, gravel, broken concrete, asphalt or similar material, and shall otherwise be maintained in accordance with all applicable Township codes, ordinances and regulations.
- (e) Maintenance shall include, but not be limited to, watering, irrigation, cutting and mowing of required ground cover or landscape and removal of all trimmings.
- (f) Pools and spas of shall be maintained so the water remains free and clear of pollutants and debris and shall comply with the regulations set forth in the applicable code(s), and shall otherwise be maintained in accordance with all applicable Township codes, ordinances and regulations.
- (g) Failure of the Mortgagee, Owner, and transferees to properly maintain the property as required by this Chapter may result in a violation of the applicable code(s) and issuance of a citation or notice of violation in accordance with the applicable code of the

Township. Pursuant to a finding and determination by the Township Code Enforcement Officer, District Justice Magistrate or a court of competent jurisdiction, the Township may take the necessary action to ensure compliance with this section.

- (h) In addition to the above, the property is required to be maintained in accordance with all applicable Township codes, ordinances and regulations of the Township .

SECTION 152-17 SECURITY REQUIREMENTS

- (a) Properties subject to these Sections shall be maintained in a secure manner so as not to be accessible to unauthorized persons.
- (b) A “secure manner” shall include, but not be limited to, the closure and locking of windows, doors, gates and other openings of such size that may allow a child to access the interior of the property or structure. Broken windows, doors, gates, and other openings of such size that may allow a child to access the interior of the property or structure must be repaired. Properties to this Article and Chapter shall be secured in an approved manner and in accordance with the most recent edition of the International Property Maintenance Code, which has been adopted by the Township.. With the exception of Registrable Property damaged as a result of fire or other insurable loss, the registrant shall pay an additional fee as established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors for the boarding of doors, window, or other openings.
- (c) If a property is Registrable, and the property has become vacant or blighted, a Property Manager shall be designated by the Mortgagee and/or Owner to perform the work necessary to bring the property into compliance with the applicable code(s), and the Property Manager must perform regular inspections to verify compliance with the requirements of this Chapter, and any other applicable laws.

In addition to the above, the property is required to be secured in accordance with the applicable code(s) of the Township and shall be secured in an approved manner and in accordance with the most recent edition of the International Property Maintenance Code, which has been adopted by the Township.. With the exception of Registrable Property damaged as a result of fire or other insurable loss, the registrant shall pay an additional fee as established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors for the boarding of doors, window, or other openings.

- (d) When a property subject to this Chapter becomes Vacant, it shall be posted with the name and twenty-four (24) hour contact telephone number of the Property Manager. The Property Manager shall be available to be contacted by the Township Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., legal holidays excepted. The sign shall be placed in a window facing the street and shall be visible from the street. The posting shall be no less than eighteen (18) inches by twenty-four (24) inches and shall be of a font that is legible from a distance of forty-five (45) feet. The posting shall contain the following language with supporting information:

THIS PROPERTY IS MANAGED BY _____.
AND IS INSPECTED ON A REGULAR BASIS. _____.
THE PROPERTY MANAGER CAN BE CONTACTED _____.
BY TELEPHONE AT _____.
OR BY EMAIL AT _____.

- (e) The posting required in subsection (e) above shall be placed on the interior of a window facing the street to the front of the property so that it is visible from the street, or secured to the exterior of the building/structure facing the street to the front of the property so that it is visible from the street or if no such area exists, on a stake of sufficient size to support the posting in a location that is at all times visible from the street to the front of the property but not readily accessible to vandals. Exterior posting shall be constructed of and printed with weather-resistant materials.
- (f) Failure of the Mortgagee and/or property Owner of record to properly inspect and secure a property subject to this Chapter, and post and maintain the signage noted in this section, is a violation and shall be subject to enforcement by any of the enforcement means available to the Township. The Township may take the necessary action to ensure compliance with this section, and recover costs and expenses in support thereof.

SECTION 152-18 PROVISIONS SUPPLEMENTAL

The provisions of this Chapter are cumulative with and in addition to other available remedies. Nothing contained in this Chapter shall prohibit the Township from collecting fees, fines, and penalties in any lawful manner; or enforcing its codes by any other means, including, but not limited to, injunction, abatement, or as otherwise provided by law or ordinance.

SECTION 152-19 PUBLIC NUISANCE

All Registrable Property is at risk of being a public nuisance and if vacant or blighted can constitute a public nuisance, the abatement of which pursuant to the police power is hereby declared to be necessary for the health, welfare, and safety of the residents of the Township.

SECTION 152-20 ADDITIONAL AUTHORITY

- (a) If the Township’s Code Enforcement Officer has reason to believe that a property subject to the provisions of this Chapter is posing a serious threat to the public health, safety, and welfare, the Township’s Code Enforcement Officer may temporarily secure the property at the expense of the Mortgagee or Owner, and may bring the violations before the magistrate or court of competent jurisdiction as soon as possible to address the conditions of the property. Nothing herein shall limit the Township from abating any nuisance or unsafe condition by any other legal means available to it.

- (b) The magistrate or a court of competent jurisdiction shall have the authority to require the Mortgagee or Owner affected by this section, to implement additional maintenance and/or security measures including, but not limited to, securing any and all doors, windows or other openings, employment of an on-site security guard or other measures as may be reasonably required to help prevent further decline of the property.
- (c) If there is a finding that the condition of the property is posing a serious threat to the public health, safety, and welfare, then the Township may take action and abate the violations and charge the Mortgagee or Owner with the cost of the abatement to be paid by the Mortgagee or Owner of the property.
- (d) If the Mortgagee or Owner does not reimburse the Township for the cost of temporarily securing the property, or of any abatement directed by the magistrate or other court of competent jurisdiction, within thirty (30) days of the Township sending the Mortgagee or Owner the invoice, then the Township may lien the property with such cost, along with an administrative fee as determined in accordance with the Township's fee schedule to recover the administrative personnel services. In addition to filing a lien the Township may pursue any other available financial penalties against the Mortgagee or Owner.
- (e) The Township may contract with a third party entity to implement this Chapter, and, if so, any reference to the Township's Code Enforcement Officer herein shall include the entity the Township contract with for that purpose.

**SECTION 152- 21 OPPOSING, OBSTRUCTING ENFORCEMENT OFFICER;
PENALTY**

Whoever opposes, obstructs or resists any Enforcement Officer or any person authorized by the enforcement office in the discharge of duties as provided in this chapter shall be punishable as provided in the applicable code(s) or a court of competent jurisdiction.

SECTION 152- 22 IMMUNITY OF ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Any Enforcement Officer or any person authorized by the Township to enforce the sections herein shall be immune from prosecution, civil or criminal, for reasonable, good faith entry upon Real Property while in the discharge of duties imposed by this Chapter.

SECTION 152- 23 PENALTIES

Unless otherwise provided for in this Chapter, a violation of this Chapter is declared unlawful. The failure or refusal for any reason of any owner, mortgagee or agent for owner or mortgage, to register any property as otherwise required by this Article, or to otherwise fail to comply with the provisions of this article, shall constitute a summary offense punishable upon conviction by a

fine of not less than \$200 nor more than \$500 for each failure or refusal to register, of for each failure or refusal to pay the required registration fee, as applicable. Each day that a violation of this article continues shall constitute a separate offence. The penalties imposed under this article shall be in addition to the cost of prosecution and reasonable attorney's fees, and also be in addition to the registration fees in the amount established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors.

In addition, the Township may institute suits, in equity or at law, to restrain, prevent or abate a violation of this article. Such proceedings may be initiated before any court of competent jurisdiction. The expense of such proceedings shall be recoverable from the violator in any manner as may now or hereafter be provided by law.

The penalty, collection and lien provisions of this chapter shall be independent, non-mutually exclusive separate remedies, all of which shall be available to the Township as may be deemed appropriate for carrying out the purposes of this chapter. The remedies and procedures provided in this article for violation hereof are not intended to supplant or replace to any degree the remedies and procedures available to the Township in the case of a violation of any other Township Code or Ordinance, whether or not such does or ordinance is referenced in this chapter, and whether or not an ongoing violation of such other code or ordinance is cited as the underlying ground for a finding of a violation of this chapter.

SECTION 152-24 AMENDMENTS

Registration fees and penalties outlined in this Article may be modified by resolution, administrative order, or an amendment to this Article, passed and adopted by the Township .

SECTION 152-25 SEVERABILITY

It is hereby declared to be the intention of the Township that the sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, and phrases of this ordinance are severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, or section of this ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of a court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections of this Ordinance.

SECTION 152-26 REPEALER

All ordinances or parts of ordinances in conflict herewith, are hereby repealed and replaced, except any ordinance or parts of ordinances that authorize greater remedies than this article are preserved.

II. CODIFICATION

It is the intention of the Township that the provisions of this Ordinance shall become and be made a part of the Township Code of Ordinances; and that the sections of this ordinance may be renumbered or re-lettered to accomplish such intention, and the word “ordinance” may be changed to “section”, “chapter”, or such other appropriate word or phrase in order to accomplish such intentions.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance shall become effective immediately upon adoption.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED BY THE TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD THIS

_____ **DAY OF** _____, 2024.

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MAKEFIELD**

BY: _____
Chair

ATTESTED TO:

Township Manager