

ORDINANCE NO. _____

**AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND § 1(2) LITTLE ROCK, ARK., ORDINANCE
NO. 21,561 (MARCH 20, 2018) TO REMOVE THE PROPERTY LOCATED
AT 2901 DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., DRIVE FROM THE
DEMOLITION LIST; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR
OTHER PURPOSES.**

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors, after proper notice, determined that the property at 2901 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive was run-down, dilapidated, unsightly, dangerous, obnoxious, and detrimental to the public welfare and, despite a request to permit the structure to continue to stand, found that demolition of the structure was appropriate; and,

WHEREAS, by May 15, 2018, the structure had not yet been demolished; however, in the interim certain attachments had been removed which mitigated the unsafe nature of the structure; and,

WHEREAS, during Citizen Communication on May 15, 2018, speakers appeared before the Board of Directors and pointed out the historic nature of the structure to the community, and the efforts underway to have it denoted as a significant structure for Arkansas history, and hopefully a structure to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and with these designations to qualify for certain tax credits which should help raise funds for the renovation and preservation of the structure; and,

WHEREAS, among the significant historical aspects of the structure are the fact that it was built in 1929, and later acquired by Mr. Andrew Jeffries, Sr., who was the first African-American realtor within the City, and was used for several purposes until September 1, 2016; and,

WHEREAS, the structure was also the location of the Law Office of Christopher C. Mercer, one of the six (6) pioneers as the initial African-American students at the University of Arkansas School of Law, and who during the 1957 Central High Crisis was responsible to drive the Little Rock Nine; and,

WHEREAS, the property is currently owned in a Trust; however, the Trustees desire to renovate the structure and restore it to its status when Mr. Jeffries first purchased the building;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE CITY OF LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS:

Section 1. Section 1 (2) of Little Rock, Ark., Ordinance No. 21,561 (March 20, 2018), is hereby repealed to the extent that the property located at 2901 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive is removed from the list of demolitions of property because of their threat to public safety.

Section 2. This repeal is made at the request of The Helen Williams Jeffries Revocable Trust, the owner of the building; however, it will be reviewed by the Board of Directors no later than the meeting on

1 September 4, 2018, to determine what progress has been made on the restoration of the structure, and of
2 the acquisition of sufficient resources to complete the restoration project.

3 **Section 3.** The Helen Williams Jeffries Revocable Trust shall execute an appropriate document that
4 waives notice of further action of the City to demolish this structure, except for one mailed notice to the
5 Trust, if both restoration and finances for the restoration are not provided; further, substantial restoration
6 needs to be completed before August 21, 2018, which at a minimum brings the structure into compliance
7 with all relevant City Building, Fire, and other Code Provisions.

8 **Section 4.** The Helen Williams Revocable Trust shall take all actions, and execute all documents,
9 deemed necessary by the City Attorney to permit inspection upon reasonable notice of all parts of the
10 building during the restoration work allowed by this ordinance.

11 **Section 5.** To accommodate the work called for in this ordinance, the City shall provide appropriate
12 permits for this restoration work which will expire no later than September 3, 2018, and shall remain in
13 effect while work is underway and, as necessary, inspected and approved by City Staff.

14 **Section 6.** If at any time after August 1, 2018, work on the restoration of the structure at 2901 Dr.
15 Martin Luther King, Jr., Drive ceases for a continuous period of five (5) consecutive calendar days, not to
16 include any holiday weekend, then any other provisions of this ordinance notwithstanding, this matter may
17 be placed back on the agenda for the Board of Directors to approve demolition of this structure.

18 **Section 7. Severability.** In the event any title, section, paragraph, item, sentence, clause, phrase, or
19 word of this ordinance is declared or adjudged to be invalid or unconstitutional, such declaration or
20 adjudication shall not affect the remaining portions of the ordinance which shall remain in full force and
21 effect as if the portion so declared or adjudged invalid or unconstitutional was not originally a part of the
22 ordinance.

23 **Section 8. Repealer.** All resolutions, bylaws, and other matters inconsistent with this ordinance are
24 hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency including, but not limited to, Section 1(2), Little Rock,
25 Ark., Ordinance No. 21,561 (March 20, 2018)..

26 **Section 9. Emergency Clause.** *The possibility of restoration of a structure that has some historic value*
27 *to the City, but which is currently set to be demolished pursuant to law, would be essential to the public*
28 *health, safety and welfare; an emergency, is therefore, declared to exist and this ordinance shall be in full*
29 *force and effect from and after the date of its passage.*

30 **PASSED: June 5, 2018**

31 **ATTEST:**

APPROVED:

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34 **Susan Langley, City Clerk**

_____ **Mark Stodola, Mayor**

1 **APPROVED AS TO LEGAL FORM:**

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4 **Thomas M. Carpenter, City Attorney**

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