

THE TOWN OF MARION IS ACCEPTING DILAPIDATED HOUSES FOR DONATION

As the Town of Marion continues to work to improve the community, efforts are fixed on improving neighborhoods throughout the town by removing dilapidated buildings.

“A lot of times, someone inherits a property but they live in another community and just don’t have the time or resources to take down a house that’s not in livable shape,” said Ken Heath, Marion’s Director of Community and Economic Development. “They’re eyesores, and not through anybody’s fault. But they hurt an entire neighborhood.”

Some are victims of a fire. Some have fallen into disrepair because they have been vacant for years. And all remain on the tax rolls, causing a financial burden on the owners or their heirs.

“Now we have a way to help,” added Heath. “The Town of Marion started with one donated property. The family had passed, leaving a house to heirs, and the heirs lived out of town. The house was in terrible shape, but was still costing them for taxes. When they called to ask if there was assistance, we started thinking – this could lead to great things for everyone involved!”

To date, the town has acquired eight houses and is working with property owners on another three. “One was donated by the bank, the Town purchased a couple at tax sale, and a couple have been outright donated just to clear up the taxes. On each one, the Town gets the permits, clears the lot, and provides green space in these neighborhoods, replacing dangerous buildings that pull surrounding property values down.”

One of Heath’s proposals to the Town Council is to consider finding unique ways to repurpose these properties. “We’d love to see new homes built back in their place,” said Heath, “and we’re working on ways to help do that. Improving quality of life for all our citizens includes safe, sanitary and attractive homes, and we’re looking forward to helping!”

If you have a house or property you are interested in donating to the Town of Marion, please contact Ken Heath at kheath@marionva.org or call (276) 378-5026.