



Erie County Clerk  
Michael P. Kearns



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **ZOMBIE HOUSE DEMOLISHED IN THE VILLAGE OF KENMORE**

*Thanks to Collaboration between Village, Ocwen Financial Corp., & Erie County Clerk  
Zombies Initiative*

**BUFFALO, August 5, 2020**— A longstanding vacant and abandoned zombie house was demolished in the Village of Kenmore on Tuesday. According to neighbors, the property at 18 Euclid Avenue in Kenmore, New York had been vacant for at least 10 years. The property was first reported to the Erie County Clerk’s Zombies Initiative in the fall of last year. At that time, the roof was falling apart and pieces were blowing into neighbors’ yards; the porch was collapsing; and the house had become a haven for pigeons and rats. Members of the Initiative team contacted Village officials, who said they were well aware of the conditions and had already begun the legal process to demolish the property.

Meanwhile, a foreclosure action had been pending on the property since 2018. The mortgage was now being serviced by Ocwen Financial Corporation. Accepting of its obligations under New York’s zombie maintenance laws, Ocwen Financial Corporation participated in regular conference calls with the Zombies Initiative team. Ocwen secured the property, installed a chain-link fence, and accelerated the foreclosure action. The case is now being handled by Hon. Paula Feroletto, Administrative Judge of the Eighth Judicial District.

Due to major mold infestation and water damage, the property was beyond repair and a demolition was needed. Because they were not the titled owners of the property, Ocwen could not do the demolition but agreed to pay the Village of Kenmore for the costs of demolition. The Village of Kenmore went through the necessary legal steps to get an Order of Demolition and review contractor bids to demolish the property. After asbestos abatement was complete, the demolition began and was finished on Tuesday.

“The demolition of this property signifies a turning point in our fight against Zombie properties,” said Erie County Clerk Michael P. “Mickey” Kearns. “Through our Countywide Zombie Task Force, we have developed relationships with banks, servicers, and municipalities that have facilitated immense progress in addressing blight in our communities. Each partner played an important role in ensuring this property was dealt with as quickly as possible. The request for and

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approval of demolition came from the Village of Kenmore. Ocwen will pay for the cost, and the neighbors will no longer have to live with the dangers this structure posed to their community.”

Patrick Mang, Mayor for the Village of Kenmore, said: “The Village of Kenmore is committed to addressing Zombie properties, whether it be rehabilitation or demolition. I would like to thank the Erie County Task Force, especially Jordan L. Zeranti for all her work, Ocwen Financial Corporation for its commitment and the reimbursement of the costs to the Village. Lastly, I would like to thank our Building Department, Mike Berns for his work with the process of the demolition of this property.”

Jordan L. Zeranti, Esq., Managing Attorney of Zombie Foreclosures at the WNY Law Center, said: “This demolition would not have occurred without the tireless efforts of each of our partners. Mayor Patrick Mang and his staff held numerous hearings to ensure the demolition process was completed quickly while following proper procedure. Because Ocwen has agreed to reimburse the Village for the demolition costs, we were able to ensure that this necessary demolition happened without an added cost burden on local taxpayers.”

Tamara E. Gifford, Director of Community & External Relations at Ocwen Financial Corporation, said: “Ocwen’s commitment to communities includes partnerships such as this, where we worked together with the mayor’s office and the Western New York Law Center to prevent the vacant property from negatively impacting the community. Our financial contribution towards the property demolition supports the revitalization of this neighborhood.”

Neighbors are encouraged to report vacant and abandoned homes by visiting [www.eriecountyclerkzombies.com](http://www.eriecountyclerkzombies.com) or visiting the Erie County Clerk’s Zombies Initiative Facebook page.

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