
Blighted Property Review Committee
Thursday, August 7, 2025
Hybrid Meeting / Council Chambers
Certification Hearing
Meeting Report

Mr. Keith called the Certification Hearing to order at 6:04 pm. He announced that a quorum was present.

BPRC Attendance: J. Keith, A. Boyd, J. Keith, C. Miller, P. Rye, T. McMahon – in person

Staff Attendance: R. Suber, M. Mayfield, Esq, L. Kelleher – in person and D. Barr - virtually

Mr. Keith asked the Board to consider the June Determination meeting minutes that were distributed electronically and this agenda.

Mr. Rye moved, seconded by Mr. McMahon, to approve the minutes from the June Determination Hearing as distributed and this agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Keith explained the purpose of the BPRC process. He stated that Ms. Mayfield will conduct the hearing after the Committee handles a few housekeeping matters.

PROPERTIES TO BE REMOVED FROM THE PROCESS

- 14. 423 Tulpehocken St., Habitat For Humanity of Berks, owner, PO Box 664 Adamstown PA, Purchased Sept 2024 – site control issues have been resolved
- 19. 730 Bingaman St., Dominguz Real Estate Holdings LLC, owner, 342 N 4th St Reading, Purchased Dec 2024 – the property no longer meets the BPRC criteria.

Mr. McMahon moved, seconded by Mr. Boyd, to remove these properties from the process. The motion was approved unanimously.

RATIFY POLICY CHANGES

1. The Community Development Department shall prepare property packets for each property to be reviewed at the hearing. The property packets shall include the following:
 - a. A copy of the letter notifying the property owner of the hearing.
 - b. A photo of the ~~letter~~ **notice** posted to the property, ~~if applicable.~~

- c. Notices showing the criteria that apply to the subject property. (Determination Checklist)
- d. Affidavits showing the status of tax, water/sewer, trash, recycling, compliance with property maintenance regulations and the structural integrity of the building with supporting photographs and citations, where applicable.

Ms. Mayfield explained that the minor changes to the policy stemmed from the modification to send the property owner a letter with more of an explanation about the BPRC process rather than just the hearing notice. She added that the properties will also be posted with the hearing notices. There were no questions.

Mr. McMahon moved, seconded by Mr. Miller, to ratify the changes made to the BPRC policy. The motion was approved unanimously.

CERTIFICATION HEARING

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Suber. Ms. Kelleher stated that Ms. Suber will remain under oath until the hearing adjourns.

21. 308 Hollenbach St., Enohenghevbe Washington, owner, 503 Governor Dr Reading PA, Purchased Nov 2023

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Washington.

Ms. Suber displayed current photos of the property and entered the property packet with the following conditions into the record:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on July 1, 2025
- Notice posted on the property on July 23, 2025
- Delinquent water charges – N/A service abandoned 2018
- Delinquent taxes – N/A
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – N/A
- Property Maintenance – 2 Work Orders, 5 NoV, Failed inspection 5/24, \$2816.50, 16 QoL Trash, 9 QoL Weeds, 5 Indoor furniture outdoors

Note: delinquent Water includes sewer, trash, and recycling

Ms. Washington stated that the documentation is incorrect as she paid her delinquent property taxes with a money order. *Note: the \$7991.20 tax delinquency at the Determination Hearing in June has been paid off and there are no current tax delinquencies.*

Ms. Washington stated that she purchased the property at a tax sale and she was unaware that this was a vacant property. She again insisted that her taxes were paid. She stated that although she has the property listed with Keller Williams, she wants to build on the property.

Ms. Mayfield stated that the property meets other criteria.

Mr. Rye expressed concern about the continued lack of maintenance at the property. He stated that the money owed to Property Maintenance is the result of her failure to regularly maintain the property and the need for the City to clear the maintenance issue.

Ms. Washington stated that she drives by the property monthly and she has now hired a contractor to maintain the property.

Mr. Boyd noted the need for Ms. Washington and her contractor to check on the condition of the property more frequently and take action faster.

Public Comment

None

Mr. Keith moved, seconded by Mr. Rye, to table the property until the December 4th Certification Hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

18. 600 S 9th St., 600 S 9th St LLC, owner, 477 Colonial Rd Ridgewood NJ, Purchased Nov 2021

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Collins

Ms. Suber displayed current photos of the property and entered the property packet with the following conditions into the record:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on July 1, 2025
- Notice posted on the property on July 23, 2025
- Delinquent water charges - \$7669.28, Water off 2024
- Delinquent taxes – N/A
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – N/A
- Property Maintenance – 3 NoV, Failed inspection 8/30/24, 1 QoL Trash, 1 QoL Weeds

Note: delinquent Water includes sewer, trash, and recycling

Mr. Collins stated that he has been clearing the trash from the property and he installed security cameras to control illegal dumping. He stated that the delay in beginning demolition

was caused by obtaining permission from the three utility companies, which was resolved in July and he received the demolition permit on July 31st. He stated that the demolition company has started moving equipment in. He stated that the two buildings on each end of the property will be demolished and the middle building will be retained. He stated that he has obtained zoning for a car dealership and a 2nd commercial use, to be determined, for the building. He added that he intends to have a structural engineer determine if the basement is stable and he plans to install a roof on building that will be retained.

In response to a question from Mr. Keith about the fencing, Mr. Collins stated that the City's fencing was removed and paid for and he has installed his own fencing.

In response to a question from Mr. McMahon, Mr. Collins stated that he currently leases a property where he operates his car dealership. He plans to relocate the dealership to this property to eliminate the rent expense.

In response to a question from Mr. Keith, Mr. Collins stated that his demo company, Pucci Paving, predicts that they will complete the demolition within a month.

Public Comment

None

Mr. Rye moved, seconded by Mr. Keith, to table 600 S 9th Street until the December 4th hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. 216 Buttonwood St., Dung Phan, owner, 2525 Cromwell Dr, Wyomissing PA, Purchased Sept 2019

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Oviedo, who has a Power of Attorney (POA) issued by Mr. Phan, making Ms. Oviedo his true and lawful agent for 216 Buttonwood Street.

Ms. Suber entered the conditions into the record from the property summary sheet and she entered the property packet into the record as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on July 1, 2025
- Notice posted on July 23, 2025
- Delinquent water charges - \$73391.69, Water off 2012
- Delinquent taxes - \$21439.71 2018-24 City, County, School
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – N/A
- Property Maintenance – 10 NoV, \$370 unpaid, 5 QoL Trash, 2 QoL Weeds, 3 QoL Motor vehicle nuisance

Note: delinquent Water includes sewer, trash, and recycling

Ms. Oviedo stated that she and her boyfriend agreed to pay Mr. Phan \$270K for the property and they gave him \$50K upfront to pay down the delinquent taxes and water charges, but Mr. Phan has not used the money for those purposes. She stated that they also pay Mr. Phan \$1,000 per month. She described their work to improve the property. She noted her wish to take title to the property so they perform the improvements more quickly.

Ms. Mayfield stressed the need for Ms. Oviedo to contact the Bar Association so she can be referred to an attorney. She noted the importance of having the attorney review the situation and the POA.

In response to a question about the sprinkler system, Ms. Oviedo stated that she obtained a \$32,000 estimate to repair the sprinkler system. She stated that Mr. Phan is unwilling to meet with this board and gave her POA so she could attend in his place.

Mr. Rye thanked Ms. Oviedo for attending both hearings but noted the importance of hearing directly from the property owner about his intentions.

Mr. Boyd stated that the property meets blighted property criteria beyond delinquent taxes, and he expressed the belief that the owner is making a profit off this building without taking responsibility.

From the photos, Mr. Miller noted that the property has two separate buildings, noting that the building at the rear of the property is in poor condition.

Ms. Oviedo asked the Committee for additional time to work with the owner to obtain resolution.

Ms. Mayfield stated that if the property is certified as blighted, that may inspire the property owner to take accountability. She explained the steps after the certification and Mr. Rye added that should the conditions be improved the property can be de-certified.

Public Comment

None

Mr. Miller moved, seconded by Mr. Boyd, to certify 216 Buttonwood Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

17. 142 Elm St., Gladys Castillo, owner, 14 Timothy Leo Ct, Fleetwood PA, Purchased Jan

2025

Ms. Mayfield stated that Mr. Butler is here representing his grandmother who resides in the adjoining property, noting that Ms. Castillo is not present.

Ms. Suber entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet and she entered the property packet into the record as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on July 1, 2025

Notice posted on the property July 23, 2025

- Delinquent water charges N/A
- Delinquent taxes N/A
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – N/A
- Property Maintenance – 3 NoV \$1200 unpaid, Posted Condemned 4/25

Note: delinquent Water includes sewer, trash, and recycling

Ms. Suber stated that this property was transferred to a new owner - Roamke Real Properties LLC 1000 Grand Concourse Apt 9B Bronx NY 10451 on May 25, 2025.

Public Comment

Mr. Butler stated that his grandmother resides in the adjoining property and the property issues at 142 Elm are degrading his grandmother's property. He explained that the recent painting of the front façade is not quality work and that missing brickwork was covered up with pieces of wood, and he pointed to the paint chips on the porch floor. He stated that rather than repair/replace the porch floor the owner merely nailed indoor flooring to the existing porch. He stated that the lack of gutters are causing water damage to 42 Elm St and his grandmother's property. He also called attention to the problems with the disconnected porch roof supports and how the property is slumping to the left. He added that his grandmother told him that the same conditions at this property were present at the property across the street which collapsed.

In response to a question, Ms. Suber explained that if the property owner is a No Show for an interior inspection, the inspector performs an exterior inspection.

Mr. Boyd moved, seconded by Miller, to certify 142 Elm Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Ms. Suber stated that the following properties do not have representation at this hearing and each property meets at least one (1) of the required blight criteria as follows. (*Note the numbers match those on the Property Summary Sheets*).

Notices were mailed to all properties on July 1, 2025 and posted on the properties on July 23, 2025.

- 1. 740 Franklin St, Cargo Group of America LLC, owner, PO Box 346 152 S Franklin St Wilkesbarre PA 18703, purchased Feb 2025** - Delinquent water charges No account; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – 2 NoV, Passed Inspection 6/7/24, \$910 unpaid
1 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors
- 2. 742 Franklin St., Cargo Group of America LLC, owner, PO Box 346 152 S Franklin St Wilkesbarre PA 18703, purchased Feb 2025** - Delinquent water charges No account; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – Passed inspection 11/21/16, \$1435 unpaid, 1 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Motor vehicle nuisance, 1 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors
- 3. 744 Franklin St., Cargo Group of America LLC, owner, PO Box 346 152 S Franklin St Wilkesbarre PA 18703, purchased Feb 2025** - Delinquent water charges \$1276.87, Water off; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – Failed inspection 8/21/17, 2 Work orders, \$1090 unpaid, 5 QoL Trash, 13 QoL Weeds
- 4. 211 N 4th St, Desta Erstie, owner, 2565 124th St FL 2 Flushing NY 11354-1124, Purchased Jan 2019** – Delinquent water \$80.50, Water on; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – 2 NoV, Failed inspection 10/14/22, \$985 unpaid
- 6. 806 N 3rd St., Amadou Diakite, owner, 267 Edgecombe Ave, Apt 51, NY NY, Purchased Sept 2005** – Delinquent water charges \$16917.75, Water off 2019; Delinquent taxes \$3973.99 2024 City, County, School; Property Maintenance – 15 NoV, 11 Work Orders, Failed inspection 8/23/19, \$15745.76 unpaid, 20 QoL Trash, 16 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Indoor Furniture Outdoors
- 10. 310 Heckman Ct., Donna Conrad & Christopher Geraldo Burgos, owners, 3013 Valentine Ave Apt 1E Bronx NY, Purchased Jan 2025** – Delinquent water charges \$270.75 Abandoned water service; Delinquent property taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – 3 Work Orders, 1 NoV, Failed inspection 2/21/18, \$1771.32 unpaid, 8 QoL Trash, 3 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Indoor Furniture Outdoors
- 12. 115 N 9th St., Tejada Domingo, owner, 237 S 5th St. Reading, Purchased May 2004** – Delinquent water charges \$110.55 Water off 2015; Delinquent taxes N/A, Property

Maintenance – 5 NoV; Failed inspection 6/2014, \$4759.87 unpaid, 1 QoL Trash, 1 Motor vehicle nuisance

15. 315 Moss St., Alex R Madrigal Morera and Maria Baez, owner, 616 Muhlenberg St Reading PA, Purchased Feb 2024 – Delinquent water charges \$3752.51, Water off 2006; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – Failed inspection 7/9/25, \$1187.74 unpaid, 1 QoL Trash, 3 QoL Weeds

20. 1145 Locust St., Walter G Hotzman & Rachelle F Hotzman, owner, 239 Melrose Ave Reading, Purchased Nov 1999 – Delinquent water charges N/A, Water off 2019; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – 2 NoV, Failed inspection 2022, \$3200 unpaid, 9 QoL Trash, 2 QoL Weeds

22. 315 S 6th St., 315 S 6th St LLC, owner, 315 S 6th St Reading PA, Purchased Jan 2023 – Delinquent water charges \$10945.52, Water off 2018; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – 13 NoV, Failed inspection 2022, Placard unsafe 2017, \$7340 unpaid, 6 QoL Trash, 2 QoL Weeds

24. 536 Johnson St., Jose Turja , owner, 1430 Monroe St Rdg, Purchased July 2022 – Delinquent water charges No Account; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – 3 NoV, Failed inspection 2013, \$1360 unpaid, 1 QoL Trash, 1 QoL Weeds

25. 622 Pine St., Juan A Solis, owner, 622 Pine St Rdg, Purchased June 2024 – Delinquent water charges \$2559.83, Water off 2012; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – 5 NoV, Placard unlawful 2012, \$585 unpaid, 1 QoL Trash, 2 QoL Weeds

27. 626 Schuylkill Ave., Humberto Castaneda Diaz, owner, 713 Wiltseys Mill Rd, Hammonton NJ Purchased Dec 2001 – Delinquent water charges \$10832.21, Water off 2013; Delinquent taxes N/A; Property Maintenance – 2 NoV, Placard unsafe 2014, \$4512.14 unpaid, 3 QoL Trash, 9 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Ice

Public Comment

None.

Mr. Keith moved, seconded by Mr. Miller, to certify the consent agenda properties as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

There was a brief discussion on the need to recertify 142 Elm Street due to the change in ownership in the October-December 2025 cycle.

Mr. Keith announced that the next Determination Hearing will be held on Thursday, October 2, 2025 and the work session is scheduled for Wednesday, September 24, 2025. Both will be

conducted hybrid – in-person and Zoom.

The hearing adjourned on motion of Mr. Rye and Mr. Miller at approximately 7:30 pm.

*Respectfully submitted by
Linda A. Kelleher CMC, Secretary*