
Blighted Property Review Committee
Thursday, April 6, 2023
Hybrid Meeting
Determination Hearing
Meeting Report

Mr. Urena, Chair, called the Determination Hearing to order at 6:16 pm. He announced that a quorum was present.

Mr. Urena announced that the purpose of the hearing is to consider if the conditions of the properties on the agenda meet any of the 12 conditions defined by the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, as amended, and the City of Reading Blighted Property Review Committee Ordinance, and can be determined as blighted.

BPRC Attendance: H. Urena, T. McMahon, N. Eyrich – in person and W. Bealer – electronically

Staff Attendance: I. Litvinov, Esq., H. Scheuring and R. Suber – electronically and L. Kelleher – in person

Mr. Urena stated that the minutes from the October Certification hearing were distributed electronically. He asked if any committee member wished to make corrections or changes.

Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to approve the minutes as distributed. The motion was approved unanimously.

PROPERTIES TO BE REMOVED FROM THE PROCESS

Mr. Urena stated that the following properties are eligible for removal from the process:

45	S	10TH ST
712	N	10TH ST
448	S	9TH ST
512	S	9TH ST
1057	N	9TH ST
1100	N	9TH ST
225	S	12TH ST
235	S	13TH ST
652	S	17 1/2 ST
310	N	4TH ST
329	S	7TH ST

833		BINGAMAN ST
752		BIRCH ST
1033		BUTTONWOOD ST
527		CEDAR ST
716		CHESTNUT ST
1559		COTTON ST
1201		COTTON ST
1619		ECKERT AV
938		ELM ST
1027		FRANKLIN ST
356		MCKNIGHT ST
1142		MULBERRY ST
2254		NORTHMONT BL
200	W	OLEY ST
631		PARK AV
132		PEAR ST
922		PEAR ST
1504		PERKIOMEN AV
1252		PERKIOMEN AV
517		PERRY ST
251		REED ST
331		SCHUYLKILL AV
754		SCHUYLKILL AV
1140		SPRING ST
1154		SPRING ST
207	W	WINDSOR ST

Mr. McMahan moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to remove the properties listed from the blighted property process.

Determination Hearing

Mr. Litvinov reviewed the hearing process. He stated that there six (6) property owners registered to provide testimony.

31. 136 Greenwich St., Manuel Frutos, owner, 304 W Oley St Reading PA, Purchased Oct 2006

Ms. Kelleher issued the oath to Mr. Frutos. A property packed was provided to the property owner.

Mr. Litvinov entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet and he entered the property packet into the record as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on March 10, 2023
- Delinquent water charges \$79.39, Water off Jan 24, 2013
- Delinquent taxes N/A
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – Fire damaged, condemned
- Codes – 7 NoV, \$600 total unpaid, Failed inspection 2/15/23, 4 QoL Trash, 7 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Snow
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – N/A

Mr. Frutos stated that he was unaware of the delinquencies.

Mr. Eyrich inquired about the fire damage. Mr. Frutos stated that as the property is vacant he has continual problems with vandalism and illegal property entries. He stated that the fire on the 2nd floor was set by vandals. The property was condemned due to the fire damage. He stated that he is working to make the repairs, noting the replacement of the rear stairway depicted in the photos on display.

In response to a question from Mr. Urena, Mr. Frutos stated that he believes he can have the property repaired in 4-5 months.

Public Comment

There was no public comment for this property.

Mr. Eyrich moved, seconded by Mr. McMahon, to table this property until the August Determination Hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. 527 Maple St, Stephanie Russell and Cesar Nunez, owner, 533 A Maple St, Reading PA, Purchased Aug 2018

Ms. Kelleher issued the oath to Ms. Russell and Mr. Nunez, who were connected virtually. A copy of the property packet was emailed to the property owners prior to the hearing.

Mr. Litvinov entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows and he entered the property packet into the record:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on March 10, 2023
- Delinquent water charges \$11,778.62, Water off June 18, 2012
- Delinquent taxes \$1195.09 2021-22 City, County, School

- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – Poor condition
- Codes – 2 NoV, 6 Work Orders, \$16,612.26 total unpaid, Failed inspection 3/13/19, 13 QoL Trash, 11 QoL Weeds, 4 QoL Motor vehicle nuisance
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – N/A

Ms. Russell and Mr. Nunez stated that they purchased the property in 2018 and requested a breakdown on the amounts unpaid to Property Maintenance. They expressed the belief that the majority of the delinquencies were inherited when they purchased the property at a Tax Claim Repository Sale. They stated that they own other investment properties, noting that there are vacant lots on each side of this property (525 and 529 Maple) and they expressed the belief that some of the unpaid Property Maintenance delinquencies may have been erroneously issued to their property.

In response to a question from Mr. Bealer, Ms. Russell stated that when they purchased the property at the Repository Sale they were unaware of the water and Property Maintenance delinquencies.

Ms. Scheuring stated that \$10,000 of the Property Maintenance delinquency has been charged against the property since 2018. She stated that she will provide a breakdown of the amounts owed.

In response to a question from Mr. Urena, the property owners expressed the belief that they can have the repairs completed within 6 months and they plan to reside at the property

Public Comment

There was no public comment for this property.

Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. McMahon, to table this property until the August Determination Hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. 545 Centre Ave, Antonia Panohaya, owner, 545 Centre Ave, Purchased March 2010
Tabled at the August 2022 Determination Hearing

Ms. Kelleher issued the oath to Ms. Panohaya. She was provided with a property packet.

Mr. Litvinov entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows and he entered the property packet into the record:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on March 10, 2023
- Delinquent water charges \$832.10, Water on

- Delinquent taxes \$7867.40 2018-22 City, County, School
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – Overgrown yard, Exterior walls need protective coating
- Codes – 2 NoV, 2 Work Orders, \$4395 total unpaid, 18 QoL Trash, 5 QoL Weeds, 6 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – N/A

Ms. Panohaya stated that her case was heard by MDJ Butler on Tuesday and she was given additional time to correct the problems at the property. She expressed the belief that the complaint about the property is discriminatory and was made by a property owner on North 5th Street. She expressed the belief that she does not inappropriately store items in her yard and she does not have maintenance problems at her home. She stated that on a recent inspection the Property Maintenance Inspector was satisfied with the condition of the yard.

In regard to the tax delinquency, Ms. Panohaya stated that she has entered into a payment plan for senior citizens with the County Treasurer's office.

In response to a question from Mr. Eyrich, Ms. Panohaya stated that she installed the tarp facing Centre Avenue to gain privacy and she stated that the tarp is not one of the violations cited.

Mr. Bealer noted that the windows on the side of the property appear to be new and he inquired if a HARB Certificate of Appropriateness was obtained prior to the installation. Ms. Panohaya stated that she is unsure.

Public Comment

There was no public comment for this property.

Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to table the property until a court determination is obtained. The motion was approved unanimously.

23. 936 Muhlenberg St., Johnny and Sandy Thomas, owner, 936 Muhlenberg St, Reading Purchased July 2003

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Aaron Anthony Torres and provided him with a copy of the property packet. The property transferred to Mr. Torres after the notices were printed.

Mr. Litvinov entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows and entered the property packet into the record:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on March 10, 2023

- Delinquent water charges N/A, Water off July 29, 2021
- Delinquent taxes \$939.24 2022 City, County, School
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – Fire Damaged, Condemned
- Codes – 1 QoL Trash, 1 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Animal Waste
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – N/A

Mr. Torres stated that he is working to repair the property with the assistance of a contractor. He stated that he replaced all the doors and windows and will work on the electric next. He predicted he could have the repairs completed within the next six months.

Mr. Eyrich moved, seconded by Mr. McMahon, to table the property until the August Determination hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

28. 514 Minor St., Jonathan Cullen, owner, 148 Caitlin Dr, Birdsboro, Purchased Feb 2020

Ms. Kelleher issued the oath to Mr. Cullen and provided him with a property packet.

Mr. Litvinov entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows and entered the property packet into the record:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on March 10, 2023
- Delinquent water charges \$78.72, Water off Nov 23, 2010
- Delinquent taxes N/A
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – Boarded up by the City, In a state of disrepair
- Codes – 1 Work order, 6 NoV, \$7788 total unpaid, Placarded unsafe 5/31/18, 2 QoL Trash, 4 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Snow/Ice
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – N/A

Mr. Cullen expressed the belief that the delinquencies were inherited when he purchased the property in 2020 and that there have been no delinquencies since he took ownership. MS. Scheuring concurred. He explained that the property was fire damaged when he purchased it and he is working to make repairs beginning with clearing the trash from the yard and the interior of the property. He stated that he plans to rent the property or sell the property after the restoration is completed.

Mr. Eyrich suggested protecting the exposed stained glass windows while the renovation is occurring.

Mr. Bealer noted the need to retain wooden framed windows and obtain HARB approval for exterior improvements as the property is located within the Prince Historic District.

Public Comment

There was no public comment for this property.

Mr. Eyrich moved, seconded by Mr. McMahon, to table the property until the August Determination hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

**19. 448 Mulberry St., City Construction Services LLC, owner, 41 Oak Ln Lebanon PA ,
Purchased June 2012**

Ms. Kelleher issued the oath to Mr. Houser, who attended virtually. A property packet was emailed to Mr. Houser prior to the start of the hearing.

Mr. Litvinov entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows and entered the property packet into the record:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on March 10, 2023
- Delinquent water charges \$12,783.92, Water off Dec 5, 2013
- Delinquent taxes \$1253.11 2021-22 City, County, School
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – N/A
- Codes – 5 NoV, 5 Work Orders, \$13,109.25 total unpaid, Failed inspection 3/16/23, Placard unlawful 8/20/15, 19 QoL Trash, 15 QoL Weeds, 6 QoL Motor vehicle nuisance, 4 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – N/A

Mr. Houser stated that his LLC purchased the property seven (7) years ago. He stated that he intends to repair and rent the property. He stated he began experiencing vandalism at the property when the renovation project was 95% complete. He stated that vandalism continues to be a problem. He stated that he had his plumbing license reinstated as he intends to begin to repair the property.

Mr. Houser stated that he emailed Ms. Kelleher an outline of the repair work which was distributed to the Board. He noted that he recently conversed with a neighbor who agreed to keep watch over the property and report illegal entries to him and to the police in an effort to control the vandalism.

In response to a question from Mr. Bealer, Mr. Houser stated that the fire at the property occurred in November 2022.

Public Comment

There was no public comment for this property.

Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to table the property until the August Determination Hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Kelleher announced that there are three (3) additional property owners present who did not register prior to the start of the hearing.

21. 548 Miltimore St., Francisco Mendez Tiburcio and Juana De Deveaux, owner, 1339 N 11th St Reading, Purchased June 2021

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Tiburcio and Ms. Deveaux. They were provided with translation assistance from someone who was attending the hearing.

Mr. Litvinov entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows and entered the property packet into the record:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on March 10, 2023
- Delinquent water charges N/A, No water service to the property
- Delinquent taxes \$176.73 2022 City, County, School
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – No roof, Poor condition, Property falling apart
- Codes – 1 QoL Weeds
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – N/A

Through the translator, Mr. Tiburcio and Ms. Deveaux stated that they purchased this property in its current condition.

In response to a question from Mr. Urena, they stated that they can repair the property in 1 ½-2 years. They stated that this a three (3) unit property that is vacant apart from the garage located on the first floor.

Ms. Scheuring stated that this property is zoned commercial and therefore has not had any Property Maintenance inspections. She stated that a health and safety inspection was scheduled for August. The photograph on display shows the property with some newly installed siding, no roof and the windows are closed by cinder blocks above the first floor.

Mr. Eyrich noted the need to apply for residential zoning.

In response to a question from Mr. Urena, Mr. Tiburcio and Ms. Deveaux stated that cars are stored in the garage portion of the building.

Mr. Bealer questioned why Mr. Tiburcio and Ms. Deveaux would install new siding prior to putting a roof on the property. He noted the need for an architect to design the new roof.

Mr. Tiburcio and Ms. Deveaux stated that they were unaware that about the commercial zoning and the need to have an architect design the roof. They questioned if the City could provide them with an architect. The Board stated that the City cannot provide an architect.

Mr. Eyrich directed everyone's attention to the crumbling brick on the upper floors near the windows which makes this property a public safety hazard. He suggested that the owners consult with an architect and contact the City Zoning Office.

Public Comment

There was no public comment for this property.

Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to table this property until the August Determination hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

29. 429 A Locust St., Edward Daniszewski, owner, 20 Dautrich Dr Reading 19606, Purchased Feb 1993

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Daniszewski.

Mr. Litvinov entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows and entered the property packet into the record:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on March 10, 2023
- Delinquent water charges N/A, Water on
- Delinquent taxes N/A
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – Vacant property in poor condition
- Codes – 3 NoVs, \$2783 total unpaid, 4 QoL Trash, 5 QoL Weeds
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – N/A

Mr. Daniszewski questioned the claim of QoLs for weeds as he acts quickly to kill all growth. He stated that he resided at this property when he returned from California and that since the property has been vacant it has been plagued with vandalism and theft of the ceiling tiles. He noted that the copper piping was replaced with acrylic piping. He stated that Property Maintenance inspections at his properties are unnecessary as he is a property inspector.

Mr. Eyrich called Mr. Daniszewski's attention to the problems with the crumbling façade and fascia near the roofline.

Mr. Daniszewski stated that his rear glass windows melted during a fire at the adjoining property.

Public Comment

There was no public comment about this property.

Mr. Eyrich moved, seconded by Mr. McMahon, to table this property until the August Determination Hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Kelleher informed the property owners present for 832 Thorn Street that their property was removed from the agenda as it did not meet the required blighted criteria.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Litvinov 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)*

All properties received notice of the hearing mailed March 10, 2023 and the properties requiring posting were posted on either the 28th or 29th of March.

1. 742 N 11th St., Value Rentals of Reading LLC, owner, PO Box 402, Temple PA 19560, Purchased Nov 2021- Delinquent taxes \$1982.94 2022 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$127.61; Water off 12/27/22; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Condemned and vacant; Codes – \$240 total unpaid

2. 622 N 8th St, David Crespo, owner, 622 N 8th St Reading 19601, Purchased Aug 2022 - Delinquent taxes \$358.45 2021-2022 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$633.15; Water off 9/25/18; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Boarded up first floor, vacant; Codes – 9 NoVs, Failed inspection 9/8/22, 3 QoL Trash, 3 QoL Weeds, \$4295 total unpaid

4. 730 Bingaman St, Francisco Dominquez, owner, 407 S 9th St Reading, Purchased Jan 2022 (Tabled at Aug 2022 Determination Hearing) - Delinquent taxes N/A ; Delinquent water \$78.72, Water off 3-13-13; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Poor condition, Exterior rear no longer attached, No utility Service; Codes – 1 Work Order, 3 NoV, Failed inspection 8/25/22, 2 QoL trash, 4 QoL weeds, \$1102.56 total unpaid

6. 906 N 5th St, Andres Hernandez, owner, 142 N 10th St., Rdg PA, Purchased May 2006 Delinquent taxes N/A ; Delinquent water \$78.72, Water off 3-13-13; Electric N/A; Gas N/A;

Trades Poor condition, Exterior rear no longer attached, No utility Service; Codes – 1 Work Order, 1 NoV, Failed inspection 4/24/17, 13 QoL trash, 14 QoL weeds, 5 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors, \$16,939.06 total unpaid

9. 450 Schuylkill Ave, Wilson Laboy, owner, 200 E Robeson St Lot 34 Lakeland FL, Purchased Dec 1994 - Delinquent taxes \$377.90 2022 City, County; Delinquent water \$13,323.79; Water off 6/24/14; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Vacant, Poor condition, Doors boarded up; Codes – 1 Work Order, 3 NoVs, 4 QoL trash, \$850 total unpaid

11. 209 Hudson St, Rafael Andrade Fuentes, owner, 209 Hudson St. Reading PA, Purchased Aug 2004 - Delinquent taxes \$930.18 2021-22 City, County; Delinquent water \$3868.54; Water off 1/14/22; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades No roof, Poor condition, Condemned; Codes – 1 Work Order, 2 NoVs, 2 QoL trash, 1 QoL snow/ice, \$460 total unpaid

12. 1145 Cotton St, Golden Circle Realty Inc, owner, PO Box 664 Adamstown PA, Purchased July 2022 - Delinquent taxes \$22,072.53 2009-22 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$12,788.87; Water off 5/1/12; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Poor condition; Codes – 3 Work Orders, 3 NoV, Failed inspection 9/8/22, 28 QoL trash, 16 QoL weeds, 3 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors, \$12,200 total unpaid

14. 1260 N 10th St, Francisco Rivera, owner, 1260 N 10th St Reading PA, Purchased Nov 2013 - Delinquent taxes \$3930.18 2021-22 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$9856.87; Water off 3/26/23; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Boarded up, Vacant; Codes – 4 Work Orders, 11 NoV, 5 QoL trash, \$4982.88 total unpaid

15. 155 Pear St, Robert and Isabella Sheperson, owner, 28 Northgate Ln, Willinboro NJ, Purchased Aug 1962 - Delinquent taxes \$6198.68 2018-22 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$78.72; Water off 7/20/16; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Vacant and boarded up; Codes – 2 Work Orders, 2 NoV, 10 QoL trash, 9 QoL weeds, 1 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors, \$1829.50 total

16. 110 S 9th St, Julio Reyes, owner, 102 S 9th St Reading PA, Purchased June 1999 - Delinquent taxes \$4993.30 2021-22 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$31,882.63; Water off 7/29/12; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Rear in poor condition, Stop work order for unpermitted construction; Codes – Placarded unsafe 11/20/12, Failed inspection 10/15/13 \$6885 total unpaid

22. 338 Moss St., Marlon Chang, owner, 1002 Josephine Dr, Temple PA 19560, Purchased Sept 2019 - Delinquent taxes \$2544.81, Delinquent water \$13,016.62; Water off 9/1/09; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Boarded up and vacant, Poor condition; Codes – 1 Work Order, 1 NoV, Placard unlawful 7/16/13, 7 QoL trash, 12 QoL weeds, 1 QoL indoor furniture outdoors, \$2898.81 total unpaid

24. 826 Pear St., Ramon Acevedo, owner, 5103 Casa Grande Rd, Temple PA 19560, Purchased Oct 2016 - Delinquent taxes \$1963.70 2022 City, County School; Delinquent water \$7911.66; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Poor condition, Roof in disrepair, Windows missing; Codes –3 Work Orders, 8 NoVs, Failed Inspection 1/25/23, 5 QoL Trash, 6 QoL, Weeds, 2 QoL Snow, 2 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors. \$12,955 total unpaid

25. 830 Thorn St., Shark Investments I LLC, owner, PO Box 13404, Reading PA, Purchased May 2021 - Delinquent taxes \$2643.03 2021-22 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$7993.01; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Fire damaged, No windows 2nd floor, No utilities; Codes – 1 Work Order, 4 NoV, No Show inspections since 2012, 8 QoL Trash, 1 QoL weeds, \$1650 total unpaid

30. 121 W Greenwich St., Karen Loose and David Warren, owner, 7625 Lakeside Ave, Harrisburg PA, Purchased July 1994 - Delinquent taxes \$3764.52 2021-22 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$4368.52; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades Vacant, Poor condition; Codes – 2 NoV, 6 QoL Trash, \$1635 total unpaid

28. 316 N 2nd St, Elian Cruz Huertas, owner, 316 N 2nd St Reading PA, Purchased Dec 2011 - Delinquent taxes \$1577.92 2018-21 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$6269.12 Water on; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes –1 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors, \$935 total unpaid

29. 126 Buttonwood St, Edgardo Morales, owner, 344 N 2nd St Reading PA, Purchased Sept 2018 - Delinquent taxes \$1496.69 2020-21 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$4092.22; Water off 2013; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 4 Work Orders, 6 NoVs, 14 QoL trash, 11 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors, \$11,009.32 total unpaid

Public Comment

None.

Mr. McMahon moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to determine the consent agenda properties as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

No other business was brought forward. Mr. Urena announced that the certification hearing will be held on Thursday, June 1, 2023. This hearing will be conducted via hybrid – both in-person and Zoom.

Mr. McMahon moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich to adjourn the hearing.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, Secretary