
Blighted Property Review Committee
Thursday, October 21, 2021
Virtual Meeting
Certification Hearing
Meeting Report

Mr. Urena, Chair, called the Determination Hearing to order at 6:03 pm. He announced that a quorum was present.

Due to the COVID-19 Emergency Declaration, the public is unable to physically attend the meeting. Public participation is provided via virtual meeting application through the link or the phone number included on the published agenda. All attendees are participating remotely by phone or electronically through a computer application.

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 certified as blighted.

BPRC Attendance: J. Cepeda-Freytiz, W. Bealer, J. Jones, H. Urena, E. Schlegel - electronically

Staff Attendance: L. Kelleher, I. Litvinov Esq., H. Scheuring - electronically

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

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

PROPERTIES TO BE REMOVED FROM THE PROCESS

None

Ms. Kelleher stated that only one property has representation; a neighbor wishes to testify about 42 N 11th Street.

CERTIFICATION HEARING

4. 42 N 11th St, Saul Delcid, owner, 9411 Forbell St Ozone Park NY, Purchased June 2021

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Judy Ciervo, who resides next door.

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

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class mail on September 15, 2021
- Delinquent water charges \$304.04 Water off 2018
- Delinquent taxes N/A
- Gas service off
- Electric service N/A
- Trades – N/A
- Codes – 3 NoV, 1 Work Order, 1 QoL Trash, 3 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Indoor Furniture
Outdoors, 1 QoL snow/ice
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – N/A

Public Comment

Ms. Ciervo stated that she has resided next to this property for 20+ years and she stated that a mold problem began before the previous owner who resided at the property moved away. The next owner did some interior improvements and began using the property as a rental property. Nothing was done to resolve the mold problem. Prior to the property becoming vacant there were two (2) different sets of tenants. The last moved out during the evening hours and left their belongings behind. That is when break-ins to the property began along with worsening property maintenance issues. The property continued to decay until the police determined that it was no longer safe to check the 2nd floor.

Ms. Ciervo stated that she has repeatedly reported property maintenance problems to the City, mostly the issue with mold. She noted that the condition of the rear yard prevents her from being able to enjoy her backyard. She stated that her most recent call to the City was to the Police who found both the 2nd floor and 1st floor backdoors to be unsecure.

Ms. Ciervo called the Committee's attention to the red markings on the property (photo of the property was being screen shared) and noted that it appears that the red brick behind the permastone is deteriorating.

Mr. Schlegel inquired if Property Maintenance Inspectors check for mold during inspections. Ms. Scheuring stated that this property has not had an interior inspection since 2012 and that the property owner repeatedly fails to be at the property when inspections are scheduled.

Mr. Bealer explained permastone is attached to the original façade with mortar, noting that the deterioration process starts when water is permitted to access the space between the original façade and the permastone.

Ms. Ciervo expressed the belief that the property is compromised structurally.

Mr. Urena suggested having a Building/Trades inspection performed.

Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Schlegel, to certify 42 N 11th Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

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 September 15, 2021. None required posting.

3. 1353 Walnut St., Dorran Patience, owner, 1353 Walnut St, Purchased June 2006-

Delinquent taxes N/A; Delinquent water \$7464.10; Water off 2015; Electric N/A; Gas off; Trades N/A; Codes – 1 Work Order, 21 NoV, 9 QoL Weeds, \$1300 total unpaid

5. 110 S 6th St, Carlos Jose Ventura, owner, 359 W Douglass St, Rdg Purchased Feb 2016

- Delinquent taxes N/A; Delinquent water \$1622.11; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas off; Trades N/A; Codes – 2 NoV, 5 QoL Trash, 1 QoL Weeds, 2 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors, \$1810 total unpaid

6. 143 Poplar St, Leon E Chambers, owner, 143 Poplar St, Rdg, Purchased Oct 1999

- Delinquent taxes \$4187.68 2018-19 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$3041.14; Water off 2019; Electric N/A; Gas off; Trades N/A; Codes – 2 Work Orders, 5 NoV, 1 QoL Trash, 1 QoL Weeds, \$0 total unpaid

7. 302 S 7th St, Edward L Spencer, owner, 302 S 7th St, Reading, Purchased Dec 1956

- Delinquent taxes N/A; Delinquent water \$72.39; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas off; Trades N/A; Codes –5 QoL Weeds

9. 323 N Front St, Bladimir Leyva Ortiz, owner, 135 Wunder St Rdg, Purchased April 2017

- Delinquent taxes \$5164.11 2016-20 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$15164.47; Water off 2006; Electric N/A; Gas off; Trades N/A; Codes – 4 Work Orders, 4 NoV, 6 QoL Trash, 15 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Snow/ice, \$4542.32 total unpaid, Failed inspection 2015, Placard unsafe 2017

10. 506 N 12th St, DBC LLC, owner, 113 Grande Blvd, Sinking Spring, Purchased May 2009

- Delinquent taxes N/A; Delinquent water \$592.20; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 5 NoV, 12 QoL Trash, 3 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors, \$290 total unpaid, Failed inspection 7-12-21

11. 1246 Eckert Ave, Amadou Diakite, owner, 267 Edgecombe Ave Apt 51 NY NY, Purchased May 2005 -

Delinquent taxes \$2871.53 2020 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$3398.43; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 3 NoV, 3 QoL trash, 7 QoL weeds, 1 QoL snow/ice, \$7640 total unpaid, Failed inspection 2018

12. 849 Church St, Virginia Ortega, owner, 849 Church St, Purchased Aug 1996 - Delinquent taxes N/A; Delinquent water \$74.26; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas on; Trades N/A; Codes – 1 Work Orders, 6 NoV, Failed inspection Aug 9, 2021; Placard unlawful April 9, 2021, \$9403 total unpaid; 9 QoL Trash, 4 QoL Weeds, 3 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors

13. 942 N 5th St, Bienvenido Baez, owner, 942 N 5th, Reading, Purchased May 2021 - Delinquent taxes N/A; Delinquent water \$340.98; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas on; Trades N/A; Codes – 3 Work Orders, 9 NoV, 5 QoL trash, 8 QoL Weeds, 4 QoL Motor vehicle nuisance, 1 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors, \$3925.50 total unpaid; Failed inspection 9-9-21; Placard unsafe 4-23-21

15. 153 Walnut St, Ronald Heckman, owner, 2428 S Fountain St, Allentown Purchased Mar 1994 - Delinquent taxes \$1189.04 2020 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$50316.69; Water off 2018; Electric N/A; Gas off; Trades N/A; Codes – 1 Work Order, 5 NoV, 2 QoL Trash, 8 QoL Weeds, Failed inspection 2012, Placard unlawful 2013, \$7101.13 total unpaid

16. 216 Plum St, Pennsylvania Artist LP, owner, 477 Colonial Rd Ridgewood NJ, Purchased April 2007 - Delinquent taxes \$113.64 2020 City, County, School; Delinquent water N/A; Water N/A; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 2 Work Orders, 2 NoV, 12 QoL Trash, 14 QoL Weeds, \$1952.19 total unpaid

17. 218 Plum St, Pennsylvania Artist LP, owner, 477 Colonial Rd Ridgewood NJ, Purchased Feb 2007 - Delinquent taxes \$153.86 2020 City, County, School; Delinquent water N/A; Water N/A; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 3 Work Orders, 2 NoV, 11 QoL Trash, 18 QoL Weeds, \$3151.94 total unpaid

18. 220 Plum St, Pennsylvania Artist LP, owner, 477 Colonial Rd Ridgewood NJ, Purchased Feb 2007 - Delinquent taxes \$74.59 2020 City, County, School; Delinquent water N/A; Water N/A; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 6 Work Orders, 6 NoV, 15 QoL Trash, 21 QoL Weeds, \$4873.19 total unpaid

19. 222 Plum St, Pennsylvania Artist LP, owner, 477 Colonial Rd Ridgewood NJ, Purchased Feb 2007 - Delinquent taxes \$334.22 2018-20 City, County, School; Delinquent water N/A; Water N/A; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 6 Work Orders, 4 NoV, 9 QoL Trash, 21 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL indoor furniture outdoors; \$4727 total unpaid

20. 223 N 6th St, Pennsylvania Artist LP, owner, 477 Colonial Rd Ridgewood NJ, Purchased Feb 2007 - Delinquent taxes \$108.72 2020 City, County, School; Delinquent water \$80.83; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 2 NoV, 5 QoL Trash, 7 QoL Weeds, \$2925 total unpaid

21. 225 S 6th St, Pennsylvania Artist LP, owner, 477 Colonial Rd Ridgewood NJ, Purchased April 2006 - Delinquent taxes \$108.72 2020 City, County, School; Delinquent water N/A; Water

N/A; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 1 Work Order, 2 NoV, 5 QoL Trash, 7 QoL Weeds, \$1136 total unpaid

24. 423 Tulpehocken St, John and Martha McCarty, owner, 423 Tulpehocken St Rdg Purchased Sept 1956 - Delinquent taxes N/A 2018-20; Delinquent water \$3337.10; Water on; Electric N/A; Gas off; Trades N/A; Codes – 2 NoV, 10 QoL Trash, 3 QoL Indoor furniture outdoors, \$190 total unpaid

25. 1853 N 3rd St., Anoread LLC Commercial Development Co., 1515 Des Peres Rd., Ste 300, St Louis MO, purchased Sept 2016 - Delinquent taxes N/A; Delinquent water N/A; Water N/A; Electric N/A; Gas N/A; Trades N/A; Codes – 2 Work Orders, 9 NoV, 2 QoL Trash, 11 QoL weeds, \$375 total unpaid

Public Comment

There was no public comment for these properties.

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

Other Business

Ms. Kelleher stated that the next Determination hearing is on March 17, 2022.

There was a brief discussion about the properties owned by PA Artists, with Ms. Scheuring noting that all the properties this LLC owns in the South 6th Street area are certified as blighted.

There was also a brief discussion on the Dana South property, owned by the City.

Mr. Schlegel moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to adjourn the hearing.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, Secretary