



BLIGHTED PROPERTY REVIEW COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 2010

CITY COUNCIL OFFICE

6:00 p.m.

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Public Comment**
- III. Approval of the Agenda & May Minutes (attached)**
- VI. Report & Recommendation 2010 Blighted Properties (attached)**
- V. Update – Purchase of Blighted Properties at Tax Sale**
- VI. Brief re Draft State Blighted Property Legislation**
- VII. Update on 2009 Certified Properties**
 - A. 2009 Certification List – update on eminent domain process from Redevelopment Authority**
 - 1. 317 Schuylkill Avenue – progress report**
 - 2. 157 North Front Street – progress report**
 - 3. 210 North Front Street - progress report**
 - 4. 228 North 2nd Street – progress report**
 - 5. 127 North 2nd Street - progress report**
 - 6. 212 South 8th Street (Penn Optical Bldg) - owned by 212 South Eighth Street Ltd, Isaac Teitelbaum, President, Brooklyn NY**

7. **118 West Elm Street** (Steven Roberson) – demolition scheduled
8. **343 McKnight Street** (Buy We Will, LLC)
9. **360 McKnight Street** (Sheila Perez)
10. **127 Walnut Street** (Sandra I. Greer)
11. **628 North Front Street** (Franklin Heredia) – demolition scheduled
12. **328 Pear Street** (Stephen Pettiway) – demolition scheduled
13. **317 Schuylkill Avenue** (Napoleon Scott Stephany)

B. Under Appeal to the Building and Fire Appeals Board

1. **153 Walnut Street** – under appeal to Building & Fire Appeals Bd

VIII. Follow Up List

2. **Follow-up w/ Opportunity House on 124 North 4th Street** – D. Wright
3. **Disposition of 620 North Front Street** – Ms. Mayfield and Mr. Franco

IX. Committee Reports

1. **Codes**
2. **Education**
3. **Research**
4. **Grants**

X. Other Matters

XI. Adjourn

Blighted Property Review Committee

Thursday, May 20, 2010

Meeting Report

Committee Members Attending: A. Grant, M. Candelario, D. Luckey, D. Reed, L. Olsen, W. Bealer, M. Wolfe

Others Attending: L. Kelleher, M. Mayfield, S. Haver, R. Natale

Mr. Olsen called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

Public Comment

Mr. Olsen opened the floor for public comment and inquired if anyone present wished to make remarks to the committee. As no one came forward, the comment period was closed.

Agenda and Minutes

Mr. Olsen asked the members present to consider the agenda for this meeting and the minutes from the April Meeting.

Mr. Grant moved, seconded by Ms. Reed, to approve the agenda and the minutes from the April meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

2010 Blighted Properties

Ms. Kelleher stated the list of potential properties is provided via spreadsheet and attached to the agenda. The list contains the property address, the owner information, information about each property (designation in the GVC study, and delinquencies etc.). To date the list of approximately 50 properties has not yet been inspected; therefore the Committee still does not have the Administration's recommendation on moving the property through the process, placing the property on hold, or removing the property from consideration.

Mr. Natale stated that Codes has identified an additional 14 properties they would like to be considered. The Committee discussed the two (2) lists and the need for the inspections.

Mr. Olsen stated that full interior inspections are not needed, only curbside inspections. The need to streamline the process was also discussed. Ms. Mayfield stated that the notification process could be compressed somewhat and the hearing process could also be compressed by offering affidavits for each property to put conditions on the record rather than having testimony from staff about the conditions, liens and delinquencies for each property. Mr. Haver suggested handling a portion of the properties quarterly on an ongoing basis.

The timeline spreadsheet was distributed. Ms. Kelleher noted that the notifications slated for the Redevelopment Authority were handled by the BPRC. She added that in other cities the Redevelopment Authority handles the BPRC process.

There was discussion on the process beginning at the initial inspection and ending with eminent domain. Mr. Olsen stated that if the process started now the earliest the initial Determination hearing could occur would be October. Mr. Bealer stated that the initial three (3) month period expected a "no show" inspection and rescheduling the interior inspection. Mr. Haver expressed the belief that the interior inspection can be abandoned, which would reduce the notification period and allow the initial hearing to occur in September.

The group discussed the process and approach. They asked Mr. Natale and Mr. Haver to begin by scheduling exterior inspections for the first ten (10) properties on the list. Ms. Kelleher noted that this approach should be relatively easy for the Administration to handle the first ten (10) properties as they are all located in the same area.

Ms. Kelleher asked the BPRC to consider also adding the Clymer Apartments, the burnt out apartment house located on Clymer Street, as the request to add the property onto the list came from Councilor Goodman-Hinnershitz and several property owners in this area. Mr. Luckey noted that there is also a carriage house at the rear of the property that holds additional rental units. Mr. Natale and Ms. Mayfield were asked to report back on the BRPC's ability to blight the main residence if an out building is in use and unharmed. Ms. Mayfield and Mr. Natale reported on their progress with Mr. Savory, the property owner.

Redevelopment Authority Agreement

Mr. Luckey and Ms. Mayfield reported that agreement with the Redevelopment Authority and the Community Development Department is complete and executed. The agreement will allow the Redevelopment Authority to utilize CDBG funds to undertake the eminent domain proceedings and to acquire properties through tax and private sale. Mr. Luckey stated that the Redevelopment Authority is beginning to develop a marketing plan for properties in the BPRC process. Ms. Mayfield noted the need for proper funding to be provided annually.

Tax Sale

Ms. Kelleher stated that at the March meeting Ms. Phile and Mr. Nelson reported that some properties certified as blighted in 2009 are on the Repository Sale list. She described the ability of the City to purchase these properties at either private sale or

Repository Sale. Title for properties purchased at private sale can be cleared of liens etc through quiet title, through the Court of Common Pleas.

Mr. Haver stated that he is in the process of arranging a meeting with the Tax Claim Bureau to discuss this further. A report will be provided at the June meeting.

Blighted Property Legislation

Ms. Kelleher stated that Ms. Mayfield distributed copies of draft State legislation and the Committee requested a brief so they could determine if they should express support for the legislation. Ms. Mayfield promised to provide the brief at the June meeting.

2009 Certified Property Update

Mr. Haver reported that demolition contracts were executed for the properties on West Elm and Pear Street. The property located at 113 North 3rd has a new owner; 124 North 4th Street is slated for demolition. An update for 620 North Front cannot occur until August.

Committee Reports

No committee reports were given.

Other Matters

Mr. Bealer noted the declining condition of the old bar at 10th and Pike Streets. Ms. Kelleher stated that this was formerly the Rising Sun Hotel.

As no further business was brought forward, Mr. Luckey moved, seconded by Mr. Candelario, to adjourn the meeting at approximately 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, City Clerk

Follow-up List – From May Mtg

- Inspection reports re the first 10 properties on the Target Area List – R. Natale
- Report re purchase of properties at County Tax Sale – S. Haver
- Brief on Stated Blighted Property Legislation – M. Mayfield

Address	Owner	Owner address	Pre-Emin	GVC	Tax Delinq	Water	Trash/Recyc	Leins
243 N 4th St	Lobos Four LLC aka Ben Epstein	145S E 15th Brooklyn NY 11230	Yes	Yes	School 1506.09 City 4248.86	Current	N/A	
104 N 4th St	Three Brothers Corp Pedro Acosta	4614 5th Ave #3Fl Brooklyn NY 11220 5629 Remsen Pl Apt3 Flushing NY 11378	Yes	Yes	School Current City 209.04	Current	Recyc 67.02	
124 N 4th St	Opportunity House							
207 N 4th St	Vic Properties Victoria Hernandez	179 Huron St Apt 1R Brooklyn NY 11220	Yes	Yes	School current City 603.33		44.1 Recyc Current	
213 N 4th	Lobos Nine LLC aka Ben Epstein	145 SE 15th St Brooklyn 11230	Yes	Yes	School current City 281.49	Current	Recyc \$134.05	
300 N 4th St	Yanio Garcia	2228 Raymond Ave Reading 19605	Yes	Yes	School 546.80 City 1103.04	\$361.44	Recyc 268.09	
306 N 4th St	Yanio Garcia	2228 Raymond Ave Reading 19605	Yes	Yes	School 383.85 City 774.31	386.39	N/A	
200 N 4th St	Diversified Investment Properties Gary Wegman	1900 Holly Rd Rdg 19606	Yes	Yes	School Current City Current	Current	N/A	
227 N Front St	Wendy Rosado	1546 Perkiomen Ave 514 W 211th St Apt2A New York NY 10034	Yes	No	School current City 203.74		114.11 Recyc Current	
217 N 2nd St	Ventura Octavio R Lopez	622 Pine St Reading 19602	Yes	Yes	School Current City 618.80	Current	Recyc Current	
363 N 2nd St	Martin Jermaine	622 Pine St Reading 19602	Yes	Yes	School 558.45 City 3087.60	859.68	Recyc 600.15	
200 N Front St 257 N 3rd St	OCR Joyce & McCrea	628 Spruce St	Yes	Yes	School Current	Current	N/A	

235 N 3rd St	Boykins Migual Martinez	405 S 7th St Reading 19602	Yes	Yes	City 510.05 School Current	1488.71	recyc 134.04
213 N 4th St	Lobos Nine LLC Ben Epstein	1455 E 15th St Brooklyn NY 11230	Yes	No	City 356.33 School Current	Shut Off	Recyc 134.05
827 N 5th St	Bayview Financial Holdings LP David Quint	4425 Ponce de Leon Blvd Coral Gables FL 33146	Yes	No	City Current School Current	1866.67	Recyc 402.14
116 N 3rd St	Carlos Cordona	8707 35th Ave #18 Jackson Heights NY 11372	Yes	No	City Current School 722.43	1005.21	Recyc 536.18
146 Elm St	Aladdin Bonilla	146 Elm	Yes	No	City 1653.03 School 315.04	687.98	Recyc 372.66
530-532 Penn St	Phyllis Knoblauch	619 Walnut St Reading 19601	Yes	No	City Current School Current	Current	N/A
116 S 6th St	Angela Brazzle	2206 Upper Gap Rd Coatsville PA 19320	Yes	No	City 627.80 School Current	2873.05	Recyc 201.06
123 S 6th St	Antione Kelly	1743 Reading Blvd	Yes	No	City 465.86 School Current	Current	Recyc Current Trash Current
125 S 6th St	Ester & Gary Gebhard	WyomissionG PA 19610 521 N Funk Rd Boyertown PA 19512	Yes	No	City 4522.11 School 861.85	144.39	N/A
534 Walnut St	David Hafner	2730 NE 6th Ln Wilton Manors FL 33334	Yes	No	City 378.66 School Current	44.1	Recyc Current
158 W Green St	Amin Farouk Ghorah	216 Holiday Lane Blandon PA 19510	Yes	Yes	City 1291.76 School 325.91	821.56	Recyc Current
506 N 12th St	DBC LLC Bruce Becker	1200 N 11th Street Reading PA 19604	Yes	Yes	City 459.88 School Current	Current	Recyc Current
1237 Buttonwood St	Harry Stouffer	PO Box 70	Yes	Yes	School Current	9758.28	N/A

1158 Buttonwood St	Dwight Amole Rose Torres	Cressona PA 17929 930 Centre Ave Reading PA 19601	Yes	No	City 228.68 School 1133.44 City 5852.62	Shut Off 702.43	N/A
645 Locust St	Michael Gregory	609 Madison Ave Reading PA 19601	Yes	Yes	School Current City 934.81	89.4	Recyc Current
647 Locust St	Michael Gregory	609 Madison Ave Reading PA 19601 706 E 166th St Apt 5H Bronz NY 10456	Yes	Yes	School 220 City 1406.18	89.46	Recyc Current
305 Locust St	Pagan Mireya	5H Bronz NY 10456	Yes	Yes	School 651.82 City Current	46.2	Recyc 415.32
161 Clymer St	J&B Investment Robert & Jill Savory	PO Box 553 Douglassville PA 19518	Yes	No	School 3318.82 City 9684.24	1211.87	N/A
476 Schuylkill Ave	Will Gernert	100 DeWald Rd Reading PA 19606 150 E Pennsylvania Ave	Yes		School Current City Current	Shut Off Current	Recyc Current
525 Lancaster Ave	525 Lancaster Ave Partners aka Andrew Hicks	Downingtown PA 19335	Yes	Yes	School 18118.67 City 24551.67	37520.79	N/A
922 Penn St	Richard Camelio	PO Box 8108 Reading PA 19603	Yes	No	School 561.29 City 1503.96	2499.63	Recyc 67.02
924 Penn St	531 South 14th St LLC Angelo Amendolia	820 Nichols St Reading PA 19604-06	Yes	No	School 590.26 City 1190.70	1393.5	Recyc 336.15
930 Penn St	531 South 14th St LLC Angelo Amendolia	820 Nichols St Reading PA 19604-06	Yes	No	School 800.28 City 2215.18	274.81	Recyc 134.05
932 Penn St	531 South 14th St LLC Angelo Amendolia	820 Nichols St Reading PA 19604-06	Yes	No	School 843.74 City 2788.75	197.36	Recyc 201.07
644 N Front St	Walter Barerra	3020 Curtis Rd Sinking Spring PA 19608	Yes	Yes	School 461.70 City 304.60	404.02	Recyc 273.66
516 Franklin St	Francisco Mercado	351 Broad St	Yes	Yes	School Current	Shut Off 187.35	Recyc

		Apt816B Newark NJ 07104				City 1105.11		Current
522 Franklin St	Enterprize TNT Inc	282 Woodside Dr	Yes	Yes	School Current	Current		Recyc Current
	Theodore Graul	Boyertown PA 19512			City 403.74			Trash Current
526 Franklin St	Milton Brendle	170 N Bingaman St Reading PA 19606	Yes	Yes	School Current City 665.74	Current		Recyc Current
531 Franklin St	Evelyn Ramirez	531 Franklin St Reading PA 19601`	Yes	Yes	School Current City 665.74	Current		Recyc Current
530 Franklin St	Liddy Toribio	530 Franklin St Reading PA 19601	Yes	Yes	School Current City 474.22	670.27		Recyc 804.27
532 Franklin St	Xavier Mendoza	813 N 11th St Reading PA 19604	Yes	Yes	School Current City 2241.57	1718.94		Recyc 804.27
538 Franklin St	Crespo Reality Inc David Crespo	5918 57th St Maspeth NY 11378	Yes	Yes	School Current City 272.35	Current		N/A
334 Chestnut St	Allison Little	330 Pine St Reading 19601	Yes	No	School 173.82 City 907.41	1115.23		Recyc 379.26
318 N 6th St	Eramildes Gonzalez	245 Azalea Dr New Milford NJ 07646	Yes	Yes	School Current City 397.97	241.33		268.09
1459 Fairview St	Scott Kilpatrick	1455 Fairview St	Yes	No	School 646.38 City 447.56	379.22		Recyc 67.02
942 N 12th St	Gary & Edeana Gans	762 N 12th St 19604	Yes	No	School 604.74 City 2794.65	805.07		Recyc 267.06

From: Steven J. Haver

Sent: Wednesday, June 02, 2010 1:28 PM

To: Linda A. Kelleher; 'Lee Olsen'; 'Wayne Jonas Bealer'; 'Dan Luckey'; 'Manuel Candelario'; 'Mary Wolfe'; Andrew W. Miller; Daniel Z. Wright; Daniel S. Robinson; 'KPick@countyofberks.com'; Steven C. Franco; 'Ron Miller'; Andrew W. Miller; 'Andre'; Yohalna A. Jimenez; Michelle Mayfield

Cc: Adam Mukerji; 'Garreth Donly'; 'SPhile@countyofberks.com'

Subject: BPRC Property Survey and interactive map

Hello all-

A preliminary inspection and survey was recently completed of the BPRC target properties, and photographs were taken of the properties on the list. All the photographs and data are now available online in a map format at:

<http://www.batchgeo.com/map/8d1b0a9f9afa64a7528293718709cec3>

The map also includes properties recommended to be added or removed, and indicates the resolution of properties from 2009. This map will continue to evolve as the process continues, and will serve as a primary means of communication and coordination. Please take a moment to review the map – give it a few seconds to load; it contains a lot of information. Click on the markers or scroll down to see the photos and data associated with each property. Please pass along any comments or suggestions you may have regarding the map and data.

Based on my review, the following adjustments need to be made to the target list.

The following properties should be removed or deferred:

- 827 N. 5th – recently purchased and currently being rehabbed
- 534 Walnut St. – has been renovated
- 516 Franklin – in reasonable shape and appears occupied
- 522 Franklin – appears to be occupied, no major issues
- 526 Franklin – occupied, no exterior issues
- 530 Franklin – occupied, repairs in progress
- 531 Franklin – has been repainted; looks good
- 532 Franklin – occupied, no exterior issues

The following properties should be considered for addition to the target list:

302, 304 and 310 N. 4th are adjacent to other properties on the target list and are in as bad or worse condition.

515 and 517 N. 4th are both burned-out shells. They are on Rt. 61 coming into the City, and in the NSP2 target area.

153 Elm is in the NSP2 and Arts District target areas, across from a target property at 146 Elm, and across the street from Lauer's Park school.

237 and 239 South 6th Street are dangerously decrepit and an attractive nuisance, as are 310 and 312 Heckman's Court.

I will enlist one of our interns to verify and update all the ownership, tax, and utility data, and will continue to add photos and data to the map as it comes in.

Now that the agreements with the Redevelopment Authority have been finalized, we will be meeting soon to begin the eminent domain process for properties from the 2009 list, as well as developing priorities for the 2010 list.

Steve

Steven J. Haver
Community Development Specialist
City of Reading
815 Washington Street
Reading, PA 19601

610-655-5336 phone
610-373-2858 fax

-----Original Message-----

From: Wayne Jonas Bealer [<mailto:contempfan@gmail.com>]

Sent: Monday, October 26, 2009 10:04 PM

To: Linda A. Kelleher; Andrew W. Miller

Cc: lolsen@odgarchitects.com; lphillips@odgarchitects.com; cnett@odgarchitects.com

Subject: Re: October 27, 2009 City Planning Commission agenda

Good Morning Linda and Lee,

Sorry this has taken so long to get to you. As you see I'm working on this Monday night at 9:30 p.m. Hectic Days lately. Anyway, here is everything you ever wanted to know (I think) about the BPRC process and the Planning Commission.

According to Pennsylvania Statute and our Establishing Ordinance (Paragraph 1-547 "Reuse of Acquired Property"):

"Acquisition and disposition of blighted property shall not require preparation, adoption or approval of a redevelopment area plan or redevelopment proposal, but at least thirty days prior to acquisition of any property, the Redevelopment Authority (sic) shall transmit identification of the property to the Planning Commission and shall request a recommendation as to the appropriate reuse of the property. The Redevelopment Authority shall not acquire the property where the Planning Commission certifies that disposition for residential or related use would not be in accord with the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Reading."

As the solicitor for the Allentown Redevelopment Authority stated at our conference call, the determination is based upon zoning and the Comprehensive Plan. The statement for reuse is usually pretty general: commercial, industrial or residential reuse. I will add some more details for background for the Commission, although their statement of reuse does not have to have all of the details.

The Planning Commission, however, would probably like to know some of the idea we have for the properties, as well as have a discussion on the Penn Optical Building. Linda and Lee, you will probably be there just to give some background to the process and history on the properties. At the last meeting I had already distributed copies of the property sheets. If Linda could make another set for the members, that could be very helpful — no powerpoint needed.

The Properties:

- 212 South 8th Street: there may be a discussion if this building should be demolished and then the zoning map updated to show this property as R-3 like the surrounding area if there is any thought towards new apartments. Otherwise, should the building be demolished to make way for light manufacturing or other commercial venture like an Auto Body shop (there is one on the corner of Bingaman and 8th that might be looking for more space, for example).

- 118 W Elm Street: This building is scheduled for demolition. I have already submitted a plan for using this lot and the neighboring lots, once they are acquired, for the use of a parking lot for Funeral Home at the corner of W. Elm and Front St. I believe 116 W Elm will make it to the list for demolition in 2010. This would be a change from residential to commercial in this case. There will be a question from Fritz about how the properties are handled and dispersed. If Linda could give some background about the agreement that is being hammered out between Community Development and the Redevelopment Authority, this could be very helpful.
- 343 McKnight Street: This property is slowly making its way to the demolition list. Since this property has a \$10,000 water bill, it probably won't be rehabbed by the people who are taking care of 157 Front Street. I would recommend demolition and splitting the property between the neighboring owners (its a 15 ft. wide lot). This would be a residential reuse as green space.
- 157 N Front Street: The original intention was to combine this with 155 N Front Street and sell the two lots to Habitat for Humanity. Since the one couple has come forward with the intention to rehab, this idea has been put to rest. Either way this would be a residential reuse and considering the square footage this would become an apartment building again.
- 360 McKnight Street: This building is in pretty good shape. This would be a residential reuse, single-family residence, by rehab.
- 210 N Front Street: This one might be coming off the list. This would be a residential reuse, anyway. The question will be if it will become a single-family residence as Mr. Amado testified, or will it become an apartment building again. It would be a pretty big single-family home for that neighborhood (although I don't believe it is bigger than my house).
- 228 N 2nd Street: Since Celia Garcia is moving back to Puerto Rico, it looks like NHS might take control of this building. Although the background story is a little fishy. Anyway, this is a residential reuse, single-family residence, by rehab.
- 127 Walnut Street: I'm not sure of the condition of this building. Steve Franco hasn't mentioned demolition, so I assume this will be a rehab into an apartment building.
- 153 Walnut Street: Mr. Heckman's building. Although he is rehabbing into an apartment building, it would be nice to see this returned to a single-family home and combined with 155 Walnut Street, which was demolished this past year. Either way, this is a residential reuse by rehab.
- 628 N Front Street: This building will be demolished. The plan is to combine it with 626 N Front Street and the city will turn it over to the Lutheran Church (Ms. Wolfe's) on the corner of Greenwich and N Front Streets. This would be a change of residential to recreational space: I'm not sure what category this would be according to Zoning.
- 328 Pear Street: This will be demolished. The recommendation would be to split the property between the neighbors. This would be a residential reuse as green space.

I will drop off some photos and materials from the hearings with Andrew tomorrow.

Thanks,
Wayne