



# ***BLIGHTED PROPERTY REVIEW COMMITTEE***

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2013**

**COUNCIL OFFICE**

**6 pm**

**AGENDA**

- 1. Call to Order – Lee Olsen, BPRC Chair**
- 2. Vote to adopt amendment to Bylaws**
- 3. Update from John Kromer & PMD Manager**
- 4. Update on Act 90 Implementation**

# Bylaws of the Blighted Property Review Committee

## Article I. Name and Location

The name of this organization shall be the City of Reading Blighted Property Review Committee (BPRC), and its principal place of business shall be 815 Washington Street, Reading, Pennsylvania.

## Article II. Authorization

The authorization for the establishment of this Advisory Board is set forth by Bill No. 65-2006, adopted by Reading City Council on October 23, 2006, **amended by Bill No. 106-2012 as adopted by the Reading City Council on October 22, 2012.**

## Article III. Purpose

The BPRC duly organized under these bylaws and all other applicable state and local legislation shall have the power to certify properties to the Redevelopment Authority that have been deemed blighted by meeting at least one of the 12 criteria in the State Statute and in the City's Ordinance. The BPRC will work with Redevelopment Authority, Planning Commission, City Council, City Administration and all other offices, departments, authorities and agencies as might be necessary. The BPRC shall strive to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the City of Reading, while promoting the reinvestment and reuse of properties.

## Article IV. Membership

- 1) The BPRC is composed of no less than **four (4)** and no more than seven (7) voting members. The committee shall include at least one representative of the ~~Governing Body~~ **City Council**, a representative of the Redevelopment Authority, a representative of the Planning Commission, a representative to be designated by the Mayor and at least one (1) and up to three (3) citizen representatives of the City of Reading, **as per §1-543.**
- 2) Each member shall serve for a period of **four (4)** years and continue serving until either reappointed or a successor is appointed. Representatives of the ~~Governing Body~~ **City Council**, Planning Commission and Redevelopment Authority will likewise serve for ~~two (2)~~ **four (4)** years; however, should they no longer be engaged by the body which they are representing, their service on the BPRC will cease, **as per §1-543.**
- 3) BPRC members having three or more unexcused absences in a calendar year may be replaced by City Council. Notification of potential dismissal from the BPRC will be mailed by the Chair to the board member following a second absence within a calendar year, **as per §1-543. The Chair shall inform the City Clerk in writing when a member has failed to comply with this attendance policy. Following such notification, City Council may vote to remove the member and seek applicants to fill the vacant seat, as per §1-543.**

## Article V. Meetings and Voting

- 1) Monthly meetings. Regular, non-hearing, meetings of the BPRC will be determined by the membership.
- 2) At the beginning of each year a schedule of all regular business *hearings*/meetings shall be published in a newspaper of general record.
- 3) Special Meetings. Special meetings may be requested by the Chair, or by a majority of the BPRC members. Special meetings shall be held at such place, date and hour as may be designated by the person or persons authorized herein to call such a meeting.
- 4) **Notice. Written or phone notification of a special meeting shall be given by the Chair to committee members at least five (5) days prior to the meeting.** ~~City Council and~~ the public shall be notified about such meetings in an appropriate manner; i.e. posting the date, time and location on the City website, ~~sending a letter to City Council~~ and other such methods as provided for in the Sunshine Act.
- 5) Quorum. In the event a quorum is not present at any meeting, the members may reschedule the meeting for a later date with the required notice. A quorum shall consist of 2/3 of the current voting members. The act of the majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the BPRC.
- 6) Voting. Each member is entitled to one vote, with the voting governed by parliamentary procedure according to Robert's Rules of Order.
- 7) Notes. Notes from meetings will be kept and copies of the meeting's notes will be sent to the City Clerk's Office and each member of the BPRC.
- 8) All meetings or portions of meetings at which action is taken shall be open to the public. The BPRC may meet in closed session for discussion purposes, pursuant to "The Sunshine Act of 1987."

## **Article VI. Officers and Compensation**

- 1) Officers. The BPRC shall elect from among their members a Chair and a Vice-Chair at the first meeting of each calendar year. Officers shall serve for ~~one~~ **four years** or until their successors are elected.
- 2) Chair. The Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Board and shall have the duties and powers normally invested in the Office of Chair. He/she shall enforce the by laws and regulations of the BPRC. He/she shall be the official spokesperson for the BPRC.
- 3) Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair shall carry out the Chair's duties in case of absence, incapacity, or resignation.
- 4) ~~Secretary. The Secretary will be a designated member of City Council Staff and shall be responsible for all administrative functions of the BPRC.~~

5-4) Compensation. No board member shall receive any salary or payment for his/her services. Financial support of BPRC activities shall be authorized by City Council.

## **Article VII. Advisors**

The Blighted Property Review Committee, in order to fulfill the purpose as set forth in Article III of these bylaws, shall have access to advisors. Such advisors shall be as follows:

**1) Secretary.** The Secretary will be a designated member of City Council Staff *who shall attend all BPRC meetings and hearings*, and ~~shall be responsible for all administrative functions of the BPRC~~ shall serve as an advisor to the Blighted Property Review Committee, shall be responsible for *providing administrative support to the BPRC* for recording the minutes, administering the oath at all hearings/meetings, and shall serve as a liaison between the board and all City offices, agencies and departments not represented during meetings, *and shall attest to the Chair's signature as per Ordinance Section -546.2.g and other duties as required by the BPRC.*

~~2) Executive Officer. The Executive Officer will be a designated member of the City Administration and shall be responsible for all administrative functions and communications to the Administration and public for the BPRC. The Executive Officer will sign the Execution Agreement stating he/she agrees to execute the duties in good faith including official correspondence and research on behalf of the BPRC. All communications requiring a signature may be signed by the Executive Officer.~~

~~3) 1) Codes Services Community Development Official.~~ The *Director of Community Development* manager of the City of Reading Property Maintenance Division or his/her designee shall attend all Blighted Property Review Committee hearings/meetings in an advisory capacity on issues under his/her purview, *shall be responsible for administrative work relative to properties that qualify as blighted or have been certified as blighted under the terms of the ordinance, along with other duties as required by the BPRC.*

~~4 2) Legal.~~ The City of Reading Legal Specialist shall attend all Blighted Property Review Committee meetings in an advisory capacity and advise on all legal / law issues.

~~3) Administrative City Council Staff.~~ The Deputy City Clerk *A representative of City Council staff* shall attend all Blighted Property Review Committee meetings and advise the ~~Board~~ on *issues under his/her purview* and advise on all administrative matters and shall serve as a liaison between the board and all City offices, agencies and departments not represented during meetings.

~~4) Planning.~~ The City of Reading Planning Department shall be represented at all Blighted Property Review Committee in an advisory capacity and advise on all issues related to planning, zoning and redevelopment.

5) Other. The Blighted Property Review Committee may request the attendance of other City Officials as may be necessary, to address or advise on issues before the committee.

## VIII. Duties of Blighted Property Review Committee Members

- 1) Management of business. Each BPRC member shall assist in the study and review of all issues brought before the committee.
  - a. Special Task Forces may be formed by a majority vote of a quorum of BPRC members at any regular or special meeting of the BPRC. The BPRC may request Council to appoint members of the general public to the special task force. All appointments to special taskforces are at the discretion of ***the Blighted Property Review Committee*** ~~City Council~~.
  - b. The BPRC shall prepare an annual report to ***the Mayor***, City Council, and the public on its activities, accomplishments, goals and objectives.
  - c. For each issue that the BPRC reviews, it will generate a report to be filed in such a way as to be readily accessible by the public. The report shall set forth findings of the BPRC and dissenting opinions, if any.
  - d. The Chair of the BPRC shall be responsible for approving meeting agendas at the conclusion of all regular meetings. Any member of the BPRC is entitled to request the addition of items to the agenda.

## Article IX. Order of Business

- ~~1) Call to order~~
- ~~2) Citizens' comments~~
- ~~3) Chair's comments~~
- ~~4) Approval of minutes~~
- ~~5) Amendments to agenda~~
- ~~6) Discussion items~~
- ~~7) Updates~~
- ~~8) Agenda for next meeting~~
- ~~9) Adjourn~~

### 1) Meetings

- a. Call to Order
- b. Public Comment
- c. Approval of Minutes and the Agenda
- d. Discussion Items

- e. Updates
  - f. Adjourn
- 2) Hearings
- a. Call to Order
  - b. Purpose
  - c. Release of properties from blight consideration
  - d. Determination/Certification of properties represented
  - e. Consent Agenda
  - f. Updates
  - g. Adjourn

## **Article X. Hearings**

- 1) In addition to those hearings required by ordinance and applicable state law, the BPRC shall hold public hearings to process properties that meet the blight criteria as defined by the City's Ordinance and the State Statute.
- 2) Notice of the hearing shall be provided to the applicable property owners no less than 10 days prior to the hearing, as required by the City's Ordinance and the State Statute. Notice of the hearing to the public shall be provided by posting the agenda on the City's website.
- 3) At the hearings, properties with representation present shall be heard first and properties without representation shall be handled in a Consent Agenda format.
- 4) The BPRC may establish time limits on comment from the property owner or the public.
- 5) A record shall be kept of those speaking before the BPRC at such hearings.
- 6) The BPRC shall make a decision whether to ~~remove a property from blight consideration~~, table a property, determine a property, certify an eligible property or ***decertify a property, if the property no longer meets the blight criteria established in the ordinance and the state statute.***
- ~~7) ***The BPRC may decertify a property previously certified by vote if evidence exists that the property no longer qualifies as blighted according to the definition established by the state.***~~

- 8) Copies of all testimony and other evidence provided at the must be forwarded to the City Clerk's Office at the conclusion of the hearing. ~~**Originals of all documents must be forwarded to the Community Development Department at the conclusion of the hearing.**~~

## **Article XI. Amendments**

- 1) If at any time the established bylaws are determined to be at conflict with BPRC activities or impose too great a set of constraints, the BPRC may propose amendments to the bylaws.