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**Blighted Property Review Committee**  
**Thursday, February 21, 2013**  
**Determination & Certification Hearing**  
**Meeting Report**

Mr. Luckey called the Determination and Certification Hearing to order at 6:05 pm. He announced that a quorum was present. He also announced that Mr. Olsen was unable to attend this evening due to a work commitment.

Mr. Luckey announced that the purpose of the hearing was to consider if the conditions of the properties on the agenda met any of the 12 conditions set by the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, as amended and the City of Reading Blighted Property Review Committee Ordinance, and could be certified or determined as blighted.

**BPRC Attendance:** W. Bealer, H. Urena, M. Wolfe, D. Luckey

**Staff Attendance:** L. Kelleher, T. Butler, Esq., M. Reinhart, B. Nicarry

Mr. Luckey stated that **456 Douglass Street**, listed for certification, no longer meets the blight criteria and should be removed from the process

**Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to remove 456 Douglass Street from the process. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Mr. Luckey asked Ms. Butler, attorney from the City's Law Department, to conduct the hearing. Ms. Butler explained the hearing procedures and summarized the blighted conditions as set forth in the City's Blighted Property ordinance. She stated that properties with owners present would be taken first and the remaining properties will be handled in a consent agenda fashion. All property owners present were provided with a copy of the property packets that will be entered into record.

**DETERMINATION HEARING**

Ms. Butler stated that the properties will be taken out of agenda order. The properties with owners or others willing to testify will be taken before properties not having representatives present.

**1. 1125 Moss St, Bruce Becker aka DBC Property Mgmt, owner, 221 W Douglass St Reading Pa 19601 purchased Feb 2002**

Ms. Butler asked Mr. Becker to step forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Becker. Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on January 11, 2013
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$255.59; Residential Water Service off – Fire Service on
- Gas service off
- Electric service on
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades: Broken windows, exposure to elements
- Codes: NOV exterior condition, 2012 Rehab Plan issued - no progress, Illegal Rental 2013 \$1300, unregistered as a vacant property
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling Charges N/A

Mr. Becker stated that he plans to obtain financing for the rehab of this property when the rehabilitation of 506 N 12<sup>th</sup> Street is completed. He stated that he is converting 506 N 12<sup>th</sup> to a 36 unit apartment building. He explained that he cannot obtain financing for 1125 Moss until 506 N 12<sup>th</sup> is completed. He stated that he plans to begin work on 1125 Moss in approximately 36 months.

Ms. Wolfe questioned Mr. Becker's ability to obtain financing to begin 1125 Moss. Mr. Becker explained the financial packages used to rehabilitate multiple properties.

Mr. Becker stated that the first floor is secure and questioned why he needs to spend \$20,000 to secure the upper floors. Mr. Nicarry noted that securing the upper floor windows would prevent interior water damage.

Ms. Butler opened the public comment period and no one stepped forward to speak.

**Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Ms. Wolfe, to determine 1125 Moss St as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**2. 1729 Centre Ave., Tropic Holdings LLC, owners, 418 Moss St, Rdg, 19604, purchase date June 2010**

Ms. Butler asked Mr. Rafael Figueroa to step forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Figueroa.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on January 11, 2013
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$166.71; Water off 2011
- Electric on
- Gas on
- Delinquent Taxes 2012 City School and County \$1746.30
- Trades: Under repair, awaiting submission of final improvement plan
- Codes: NOV 2012 repair windows, doors and paint
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling N/A

Mr. Figueroa distributed drawings of the plan for the property, which is the old Russo warehouse. He stated that he is installing 11 units, with an underground garage and laundry facilities. He stated that he obtained zoning for the project and has been working with a contractor. He stated that he has also been working with Building-Trades to secure the required improvement permits. He stated that improvement to the façade is the next step. He stated that he expects the project to be completed in August 2013.

Mr. Nicarry stated that Mr. Figueroa has been working with Building Trades and that this is a promising project.

The Committee discussed delaying the determination of the property.

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. No one stepped forward.

### **BPRC Vote**

**Mr. Luckey moved, seconded by Ms. Wolfe to table 1746 Centre Avenue until the June Hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### **3. 225 S 12<sup>th</sup> St, Alexis Hallums, owner, 225 S 12<sup>th</sup> St, Rdg, 19601 purchased July 2006**

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is not present; however, Mr. Giles from Wells Fargo will speak during the public comment period.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on January 11, 2013
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$1019.58; Water off 2012
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Electric on
- Gas off

- Trades: no exterior structural issues
- Codes: Placard failure to appear for inspection, 8 QoL tickets weeds and trash \$1635, unpaid rental permit 2011 and 12
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling Charges \$1473.45

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is not present.

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Butler opened the floor for public comment. Michael Giles, representing Wells Fargo stepped forward and Ms. Kelleher administered the oath.

Mr. Giles stated that Wells Fargo plans to foreclose on this property but has not yet filed to begin the process. He inquired what Wells Fargo needs to do to avoid the certification of the property.

Ms. Butler stated that all delinquent fees must be paid and the trash and weeds need to be removed. Ms. Kelleher noted the need for Wells Fargo to continue to keep the property maintained and free of trash and weeds.

Mr. Giles inquired about how he could remove the property from the process. Ms. Butler explained that all fees must be paid and the water service needs to be restored. She also noted the need for the property to be registered as vacant.

### **BPRC Vote**

**Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to approve the determination of 225 S 12<sup>th</sup> St as a blighted property. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**4. 128 West Oley St, Hirneisen Barry L % Pamela Hirneisen, owner, 46601 Carriage Ct Sterling VA 20164, Purchased Jan 2002**

Ms. Butler asked Mr. Hirneisen to step forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Hirneisen.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on January 11, 2013
- Delinquent water charges totaling \$2803.15; Water off 2004
- Delinquent Taxes 2011 and 12 City School and County \$2117.32
- Trades: no exterior structural issues
- Codes: 13 QoL and 5 Work Orders for trash and weeds \$2173.31.

- Delinquent Recycling \$232.49

Mr. Hirneisen stated that this property has been in his family since the 1950s and he took title in 2002. He stated that he plans to enter into a payment plan with Portnoff in March. He stated that he drove here from Virginia to attend the hearing and he requested 90 days to list the property for sale with a realtor.

Mr. Luckey explained that the process provides 60 days between the hearings. Mr. Bealer noted that property owners have an additional 60 days following the certification on a property to correct the property's problems.

### **Public Comment**

Terrence Fick stepped forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath.

Mr. Fick stated that he knows the Hirneisen family and attempts to keep the property secured and the problems remediated.

Ms. Butler explained that Property Maintenance has also been spending money to remove trash and weeds from the property.

Mr. Hirneisen questioned the monthly water charge. Mr. Luckey stated that there is a monthly line charge.

### **BPRC Vote**

**Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to approve the determination of 128 W. Oley Street as a blighted property. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### **Certification**

**1. 930 North 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Jenny Anahi Tapia & Pablo Guzman owner, purchased July 2012**

Ms. Butler asked Ms. Tapia to step forward. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Tapia.

Ms. Butler entered the following conditions into the record from the property summary sheet as follows:

- Notice mailed to the property owner via first class and certified mail and posted on the property on December 31, 2012
- Delinquent water charges N/A; Water on
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Electric on
- Gas off
- Trades: Unrepaired front porch and porch roof, lack of porch floor, hazardous

conditions

- Codes: NOV in October for failure to repair porch and paint surfaces, now in citation
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling \$1103.12

Ms. Tapia stated that she and her uncle own the property and reside in New York. She stated that the electric service is off and the property is unheated. She stated that she did not receive the hearing notification and her uncle alerted her when he saw the posting on the property last week.

Ms. Tapia stated that the contractors hired to repair the porch walked off when the need for a permit from Historic Preservation was needed. She stated that she intends to obtain the proper permits and complete the porch repair work. She requested more time.

Ms. Butler advised Ms. Tapia to speak with Ms. Reinhart before leaving and Ms. Reinhart can provide the contact information for the Historic Preservation Officer.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **BPRC Vote**

**Ms. Wolfe moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to approve the determination of 930 N 5th Street as a blighted property. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### **Determination Hearing**

#### **Consent Agenda**

Ms. Butler inquired if any one representing the following properties is present and inquired if anyone in the audience would like to provide comment on the following properties. No one stepped forward.

- 1. 1411 Cotton St, GEM Property Inv, owner, 3553 West Chester Pike # 185 Newtown Sq PA 19073, Purchased May 2005**
- 2. 110 R Moss St, Victor and Keldia Cabrera, owners, 1945 Wickford Pl, Rdg, 19610, purchased Oct 2006**
- 3. 742 N 13th St, Sandra Hafer, owner, 1027 Spring St, Rdg, 19604, Purchased Nov 2006**
- 4. 637 N 9th St., Andromeda Group, owners, 703 Swade Rd Wyndmoor Pa 19038, purchase date February 2011**
- 5. 17 S 9th St, Victor & Keldia Cabrera, owners, 1945 Wickford Pl, Rdg, 19610, Purchased Jan 2006**
- 6. 528 N 10<sup>th</sup> St, Elizabeth Polk, owner, 4412 Bloomfield Ave # F-1 Drexel Hill Pa 19026, purchased Sept 2011**
- 7. 502 Heine St, Ohri Keerty, owner, 128 Colonial Dr Apt C Shillington Pa 19607,**

**purchased Jan 2003**

**8. 143 W. Green St, Yvette Richardson, owner, 143 W. Green St, Rdg, 19601, purchased Aug 1995**

**9. 1627 N 10<sup>th</sup> St, Rosa and Juan C Cantres, PO Box 13775 Reading Pa 19612, purchased July 2005**

No one stepped forward.

Ms. Butler stated that these properties meet the blight criteria. In summary:

- All notices posted and mailed either Dec 31, 2012 or Jan 11, 2013
- 1411 Cotton: Water delinquency \$689.40 and off 2008- 2012 City School and County Taxes delinquent \$5301.91, Trades – fire damage possible structural deficiency, Codes – NOV roof repair; Trash and Recycling \$408.09
- 110R Moss: City County and School Taxes delinquent 2008-12 \$2546.05; Trades - Broken out windows, no roof 2+ years, declared unsafe structure under UCC; Codes – Guilty verdict failure to repair 2011; Mr. Nicarry stated that Trades has been working on this property for 3+ years and he stated that the property is hazardous
- 742 N 13th: Water delinquent \$543.96 and off; Electric and Gas off, Delinquent City, County and School taxes 2011-12 \$2853.96; Trades front porch roof rotting; Codes – failure to repair porch roof and paint Citation 2012, unpaid QoL \$75, unpaid work orders weeds, trash and secure property \$208.75, Delinquent trash and recycling \$308.72
- 637 N 9th: Water delinquent \$729.68 and off 2012, Gas off; Delinquent City and County 2011-12 taxes \$2683.87, Codes – unpaid QoL trash and weeds \$410; Delinquent Recycling \$545.69 – *Note owner sent letter requesting more time*
- 17 S. 9th: Water delinquent \$2081.82 and off 2013, Gas off; Delinquent City, School and County taxes 2010-12; Codes – Placarded 2012 failure to appear for inspection \$250 and unpermitted rental
- 1453 Fairview: Water delinquent \$8189.32 and off 5-07, Delinquent Taxes 2012 \$461.99, QoL \$320, Delinquent Recycling \$90.56, Liens \$9410.38 RAWA
- 528 N 10th: Water delinquent \$1107.81 and off 2011, Electric and Gas off, Codes – NOV vacant property, Work Orders trash, weeds and secure property, 21 QoL \$3572.82, unpaid rental permit 2010-12, Delinquent Trash and Recycling \$1778.42
- 143 W Green: Water delinquent \$2242.88 and off 2008, Electric and Gas off; Delinquent City, School and County taxes \$3083.14 2010-12, Trades – windows missing exposed to the elements, Codes – 13 QoL trash, 4 Work Orders trash and weeds, cited for failure to secure and trash and weeds \$2137.69
- 1627 N 10th: Water delinquent \$1449.79 and off 2011, Delinquent City, School and County Taxes 2010-12 \$5532.57, Codes – citation trash QoL trash and weeds \$60

#### **Public Comment**

None

#### **BPRC Vote**

**Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Ms. Wolfe, to determine the consent agenda properties as**

**blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.**

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

**Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer to adjourn the meeting.**

