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**Blighted Property Review Committee**  
**Thursday, May 19, 2016**  
**Certification Hearing**  
**Meeting Report**

Mr. Olsen called the Certification Hearing to order at 6:14 pm. He announced that a quorum was present.

Mr. Olsen 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 defined by the Pennsylvania Urban Redevelopment Law of 1945, as amended and the City of Reading Blighted Property Review Committee Ordinance, and could be certified as blighted.

**BPRC Attendance:** L. Olsen, N. Eyrich, W. Bealer, H. Urena

**Staff Attendance:** L. Kelleher, T. Butler, Esq., K. Potts, L. Burns-Glover

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

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

**PROPERTIES TO BE RELEASED**

None.

Mr. Olsen stated that BPRC staff recommends that the following two (2) properties on tonight's agenda be tabled at this point of the meeting:

#9. 213 Cedar Street

#14. 1010 Washington Street

**Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to table the above referenced properties. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**CERTIFICATION HEARING**

Mr. Olsen 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 and the properties without representation will be considered under a Consent Agenda. He explained the hearing process. He stated that Ms. Butler will run the hearings.

Ms. Butler described the hearing process and procedure.

**1. 834 Elm Street, Josias Pina, 834 Elm Street, Reading PA, purchased October 2015**

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is present and was provided with a property packet. She noted that the property changed ownership in March 2016. The new owner is Louis Anthony Carambot, of 213 North 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Carambot.

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 mail April 19, 2016 and posted on the property on May 11, 2016
- Delinquent water charges of \$80.45; Residential Water Service off 2012
- Gas service off N/A
- Electric service off
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades – doors and windows boarded up, exterior walls need repair and paint
- Codes – 2 Work Orders, 2 NoV, placarded unlawful, \$1501.81 unpaid, 5 QoL weeds, 3 QoL Trash, 1 QoL indoor furniture outdoors
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

Ms. Butler stated that the prior tax delinquency (3 years) was entirely cleared and the delinquent water charge was reduced from \$7067.34. The Codes fines/fees were reduced from \$4636.81. She asked the board to consider tabling this property as the new owner has made considerable progress.

Mr. Carambot stated that he put a lot of work into the property during the past two months. He stated that the property has a lot of potential. He stated that while he purchased the property at the February tax sale, he paid down the majority of the water delinquency. He stated that the majority of his work was clearing the trash from the property (interior and exterior) and boarding the windows and doors to secure the property.

Ms. Butler called Mr. Carambot's attention to the photos displayed on the wall. Mr. Eyrich asked Mr. Carambot if the pictures displayed accurately reflect the building today. Mr. Carambot stated that the pictures show the property as it stands today. He offered to distribute photos of the building shortly after he purchased it.

Mr. Urena inquired about the number of units inside the property. Mr. Carambot stated that the property has four (4) units. He noted the amount of sweat equity the property has taken to date.

Mr. Bealer inquired about the zoning for the property. Ms. Potts expressed the belief that the property is zoned for four (4) units.

Mr. Carambot apologized for the unsecured opening shown. He explained that the building was opened so he could remove the remaining debris from the property. He stated that he will be re-securing the property shortly. He expressed the belief that given six (6) months he can clear the issues that qualify the property for the blighted property process.

### **Public Comment**

None.

**Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to table 834 Elm Street until the October Certification Hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Mr. Olsen thanked Mr. Carambot for taking the initiative to restore this property and for being forthcoming.

### **2. 146 Elm Street, Samuel Sanchez, PO Box 5801 Reading PA 19610, Purchased May 2010**

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is present and was provided with a property packet. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Sanchez.

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 mail April 19, 2016 and posted on the property N/A
- Delinquent water charges of \$4608.46; Residential Water Service off 2012
- Gas service off 2012
- Electric service off
- Delinquent Taxes \$2307.71 – 2013-15
- Trades – roof repair required and exterior wall repair and paint needed
- Codes – 3 NoV, 9 QoL Trash, 5 QoL Weeds, 4 No Shows, Never inspected, \$2545 unpaid
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

Ms. Butler stated that there has been no improvement in the conditions of this property. She noted that this property has been certified and released before and the property once again qualifies for blight.

Mr. Sanchez stated that he plans to make \$3,000 in roof repairs and that he has hired a contractor to repair the exterior walls. He stated that if he receives a donation he can also have the porch repaired. He asked why he should pay his utility bills when he is not living at the property. He stated that he plans to pay down the taxes and repair the windows; however, he needs time to do so. He requested financial assistance in the amount of \$20,000 to make the remaining repairs. He stated that the front wall will be fixed in 2-3 weeks.

Mr. Sanchez questioned the process used to select properties and to define the qualifying criteria. He expressed the belief that various City inspectors are too fussy and exaggerate problems. He stated that he does not want to lose title to this property and he would fight the process up to and including the United States Supreme Court.

Mr. Urena questioned the No Show inspections. Mr. Sanchez claimed that he does not receive the notices.

Mr. Bealer questioned if the PO Box number at the Wyomissing Post Office is accurate. Mr. Sanchez stated that it is accurate and he complained that he does not receive notices from the City.

Ms. Butler asked Mr. Sanchez to provide Ms. Potts with an alternative address and a phone number. Mr. Sanchez stated that he will come to Ms. Butler's office to pick up the notice. Ms. Butler suggested that Mr. Sanchez provide his phone number to Ms. Potts so she (Ms. Butler) can call Mr. Sanchez to inform him when the inspection notice is prepared.

### **Public Comment**

None.

**Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Bealer, to certify 146 Elm Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.**

Mr. Sanchez objected to having his property taken away through this process. Mr. Olsen explained that although the property was certified, the eminent domain process will not start tomorrow. He told Mr. Sanchez that he will be provided with time to make the repairs, like he was approximately four (4) years ago. Mr. Olsen stated that he and the board have reservations about tabling properties when there is evidence that nothing has changed since the Determination Hearing.

Mr. Sanchez again objected and requested financial assistance to make the repairs.

Ms. Butler reminded Mr. Sanchez to provide Ms. Potts with his phone number before he leaves the hearing. Mr. Sanchez turned and left the room.

**3. 434 South 9th Street, Robin Fishburn, 434 S 9<sup>th</sup> St, Reading, Purchased Nov 2000**

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is present and was provided with a property packet. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Fishburn

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 mail April 16, 2016 and posted on the property N/A
- Delinquent water charges of \$2501.23; Residential Water Service off 2009
- Gas service on
- Electric service off
- Delinquent N/A
- Trades – roof dormer and windows missing, no support for front porch, no porch steps
- Codes – 4 Work Orders, 2 NoV, never inspected, 2 QoL Trash, 4 QoL Weeds, \$2189.07 unpaid
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

Ms. Fishburn questioned Ms. Butler about some of the delinquencies. Ms. Butler explained the difference in the water delinquency and the amount owed for Codes violations.

Ms. Fishburn stated that she continues to have problems with intruders. She inquired if she could live at the property. Ms. Potts stated that for various reasons, including hoarding, the property cannot be lived in. She suggested that Ms. Fishburn come into the office so they can discuss the required corrections.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to certify 434 South 9th Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**4. 836 Elm Street, Manuel Mizhquiri & Maria Saquisla, 313 Pine St., Reading, purchased March 2014**

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is present and was provided with a property packet. Ms. Saquisla stepped forward with Junior Hernandez to translate. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Saquisla, with assistance from the translator.

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 mail April 29, 2016 and posted on the property N/A
- Delinquent water charges of \$2638.01; Residential Water Service off 2013
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service off
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades – doors and windows boarded up; exterior walls need maintenance and paint
- Codes – 3 Work Orders, \$4828.19 unpaid, 2 NoV, Failed inspection, 5 QoL Weeds, 7 QoL Trash, 1 QoL indoor furniture outside, 3 No Shows
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

With assistance from the translator Ms. Saquisla stated that she went to RAWA to begin to make payments and questioned why a delinquency still shows. Ms. Butler explained that the figures provided by RAWA may have been provided prior to the payment made on the account.

With assistance from the translator Ms. Saquisla stated that she has hired a contractor to fix the interior of the property; however, he was injured on the job and will resume working when his injuries are healed.

Mr. Eyrich inquired about the 3 No Show inspections. Ms. Saquisla stated that she did not receive notice of the inspection and she requested time to make the repairs before the inspection occurred.

Mr. Bealer inquired if the contractor hired pulled the required permits. Ms. Saquisla expressed the belief that the contractor pulled the necessary permits. She stated that the contractor is licensed for construction.

In response to a question, Ms. Saquisla stated that the building contains 3 units – front, back and top.

Ms. Butler inquired about Ms. Saquisla's mailing address. Ms. Saquisla stated that the address is 313 Pine Street.

### **Public Comment**

None.

**Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to certify 836 Elm Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**5. 944 Madison Avenue, Elma and Vidal Velez, 944 Madison Avenue, Reading PA,**

**purchased April 1999**

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is not present; however, neighbors are here to testify.

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 mail April 19, 2016 and posted on the property N/A
- Delinquent water charges of \$2958.51; Water Service off 2014
- Gas service off
- Electric service off
- Delinquent Taxes \$871.15 - 2015
- Trades – roof repairs needed, bricks falling off facade
- Codes –Placarded unsafe, 4 NoV, never inspected, 5 QoL trash, 3 QoL weeds, 1 QoL indoor furniture outside, \$2398.82 unpaid.
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Judy Borr who resides at the adjoining property.

Ms. Borr testified that the interior of her property has become damaged due to the roof issues at this property. She stated that the adjoining walls in her property have become damaged from the water leaking through the property. She stated that there is trash in the backyard and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor porch. She stated that the City's contractor may use her property to access these areas of this property. She expressed the belief that long term exposure to rain has compromised the structural integrity of this property. She stated that the roof and trash problems have been present since October 2015.

Ms. Borr had a conversation with Ms. Potts about having the City's contractor access the rear of the property.

**Public Comment**

None.

**Mr. Eyrich moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to certify 944 Madison Ave as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**6. 619 Clinton Street, Maribel Gonzalez, 257 Perry Ave Greenacres FL 33463, purchased Sept 2015**

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is not present; however, the property manager wishes to testify.

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 mail April 16, 2016 and posted on the property N/A
- Delinquent water charges of \$935.90; Residential Water Service off 2011
- Gas service off
- Electric service off
- Delinquent Taxes \$346 2015
- Trades – windows and doors boarded up, brick needs work and exterior paint needed
- Codes –Placarded unsafe, 2 NoV, 4 Work Orders, 3 No Show, 1 QoL Trash, 3 QoL Weeds, \$1532.92 unpaid.
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

**Public Comment**

Efrain DeJesus stepped to the podium. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath.

Mr. DeJesus stated that the property owner recently fired the former contractor hired to rehab the property. He described the problems with the prior contractor and stated that the property owner recently retained him to rehab and manage the property. He stated that the property owner owns several properties within Reading. He stated that initially he intended to rehab the Hudson Street and North 10<sup>th</sup> Street properties; however, he will now focus on this property if he could be provided with 6 months to work on the property. He stated that the property owner purchased this property in October 2015. He stated that the property owner is in the process of issuing a power of attorney to him for the management of the properties owned. He explained that he has been in the property management business since 2006.

Ms. Butler noted that the high water delinquency has been paid down by the owner.

**Mr. Bealer moved, seconded by Mr. Urena, to table 619 Clinton Street until the October Certification hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**Consent Agenda**

Ms. Butler asked if any of the following property owners are present. No one responded.

3. 425 Spring Garden Street, Peter Gulden, 425 Spring Garden St, Reading PA, purchased Oct 2011
4. 956 N 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Rafaela Fernandez, PO Box 6463 Wyomissing PA 19610, Wyomissing PA, purchased August 2005
7. 332 Cedar Street, Francis Silletto, 1148 Perkiomen Ave Apt 1 Reading PA 19602, Reading,
8. 905 Mulberry Street, Marie Josee Noel & Jonas Guerrier, 772 Bradley St West Hempstead NY 11552, purchased June 2006
9. 213 Cedar Street, Jessica Bailey, 5118 Allentown Pike Temple PA 19560, purchased Sept
10. 1314 Kenney Street, Stephan & Helen Kobylakiewicz Jr, 1314 Kenney St, Reading PA, purchased March 1971
11. 206 Belvedere Street, Lucinda & Thomas Purcell, 206 Belvedere St, Reading PA, No deed date
12. 138 S 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Kenneth Stoudt Sr., 138 S 12<sup>th</sup> St., Reading PA, purchased June 1986
15. 726 Moss Street, Gary Jones, 135 N 3<sup>rd</sup> St, Reading, 5247 Brasswood Dr Stone Mountain
16. 252 Pear Street, Brian Booker Wiggins, 252 Pear Street, Reading, purchased Sept 2013
17. 254 Pear Street, Juana Padilla, 254 Pear Street, Reading PA, purchased June 1989
19. 426 S 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Frances Torres, 1231 Robeson St., Reading, purchased Oct 2013

Ms. Butler stated that each of the following properties meet at least one (1) of the mandated blight criteria. All properties were mailed hearing notices on April 16, 2016 and were posted on May 11, 2016 if the first class letter was returned to the City as undeliverable.

3. 425 Spring Garden Street, Peter Gulden, 425 Spring Garden St, Reading PA, purchased Oct 2011 - Delinquent water \$1946.52, Water off, \$465.91 in delinquent 2014-15 taxes, Trades – needs roof and gutter repair, maintenance of exteriors walls and windows, Codes – Never inspected, 9 QoL trash, 1 QoL inside furniture outdoors, \$620 unpaid
4. 956 N 11<sup>th</sup> Street, Rafaela Fernandez, PO Box 6463 Wyomissing PA 19610, Wyomissing PA, purchased August 2005 - Delinquent water \$3681.25, Water off, \$4394.01 in delinquent 2014-15 taxes, Electric off, Trades – doors and windows boarded up, roof, fascia and exterior wall repairs needed, Codes - 1 Work order, 3 NoV, 3 No show, Placard unlawful, 6 QoL trash, 5 QoL weeds, 4 QoL inside furniture outdoors, \$400 unpaid
7. 332 Cedar Street, Francis Silletto, 1148 Perkiomen Ave Apt 1 Reading PA 19602, Reading - Delinquent water \$2241.27, Water off, \$242.92 in delinquent 2015 taxes, Gas and electric off, Trades – windows and doors boarded up, brick façade failing, exterior scaffolding, Codes – 1 Citation, 2 NoV, Placard unsafe, 9 QoL inside furniture outdoors, \$105 unpaid
8. 905 Mulberry Street, Marie Josee Noel & Jonas Guerrier, 772 Bradley St West Hempstead NY 11552, purchased June 2006 - Delinquent water \$4991.64, Water off, \$5737.69 delinquent 2013-15 taxes, Electric and Gas off, Trades – needs roof and gutter repair, downspouts damaged, Codes – 7 Work orders, 5 NoV, 3 No show, Placard unlawful, 6 QoL trash, 6 QoL

weeds, 2 QoL inside furniture outdoors, \$5505.89 unpaid

**10. 1314 Kenney Street, Stephan & Helen Kobylakiewicz Jr, 1314 Kenney St, Reading PA, purchased March 1971 -** Delinquent water \$4423.39, Water off, \$3508.73 in delinquent 2013-15 taxes, Electric and Gas off, Trades – front brick façade bowed toward street, roof leaking, Codes – 4 NoV, Never inspected, Placard unsafe, 1 QoL weeds, \$369.25 unpaid

**11. 206 Belvedere Street, Lucinda & Thomas Purcell, 206 Belvedere St, Reading PA, No deed date -** Delinquent water \$2705.65, Water off, \$4631.23 in delinquent 2013-15 taxes, Trades – roof and trim repair needed, exterior wall repair needed, Codes – 5 NoV, Citations, Never inspected, 3 QoL trash, 6 QoL Weeds, 2 QoL snow/ice, \$1240.31 unpaid

**12. 138 S 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Kenneth Stoudt Sr., 138 S 12<sup>th</sup> St., Reading PA, purchased June 1986 -** Delinquent water \$3777.15, Water off, \$1356.76 in delinquent 2014-15 taxes, Electric off, Trades – roof repair needed, missing trim, exposed to weather, Codes – 3 NoV, 5 QoL trash, 4 QoL weeds, \$1145.69 unpaid

**15. 726 Moss Street, Gary Jones, 5247 Brasswood Dr Stone Mountain -** Delinquent water \$8119.18, Water off, \$4717.87 in delinquent 2013-15 taxes, Electric and Gas off, Trades – all doors and windows boarded up, exterior walls need repair, Codes – 9 Work order, 2 NoV, Citation, 8 No show, Placard unlawful, 4 QoL trash, 8 QoL weeds, \$5779.37 unpaid

**16. 252 Pear Street, Brian Booker Wiggins, 252 Pear Street, Reading, purchased Sept 2013 -** Delinquent water \$6068.76, Water off, \$3508.76 in delinquent 2013-15 taxes, Electric and Gas off, Trades – heavy fire damage at rear, windows and doors boarded up, Codes – 8 Work orders, 4 NoV, 10 QoL trash, 12 QoL weeds, \$16,314 unpaid

**17. 254 Pear Street, Juana Padilla, 254 Pear Street, Reading PA, purchased June 1989 -** Delinquent water \$4261.77, Water off, \$2003.72 in delinquent 2013-15 taxes, Electric and Gas off, Trades – heavy fire damage at rear, windows and doors boarded up, Codes – 6 Work order, 1 NoV, Citation, 13 QoL trash, 2 QoL weeds, 8 QoL inside furniture outdoors, 4 QoL unregistered vehicle, \$3237 unpaid

**19. 426 S 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Frances Torres, 1231 Robeson St., Reading, purchased Oct 2013 -** Delinquent water \$3220.85, Water off, \$4408.66 in delinquent 2013-15 taxes, Electric and Gas off, Trades – needs roof and gutter repair, replace wood and paint, Codes – 5 Work order, 6 NoV, 3 No show, Placard unlawful, 12 QoL trash, 10 QoL weeds, 1 QoL inside furniture outdoors, \$16,541 unpaid

#### **Public Comment**

None.

**Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to certify the consent agenda properties as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.**

**Other Business**

No other business was brought forward.

Ms. Kelleher announced that there will be a non-hearing meeting on June 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss post certification action and recommendations and the next round of properties will be considered for determination on August 18<sup>th</sup> and certification on October 20<sup>th</sup>.

**Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Eyrich, to adjourn the hearing.**

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