
Blighted Property Review Committee
Thursday, October 20, 2016
Determination & Certification Hearing
Meeting Report

Mr. Olsen called the Determination & Certification Hearing to order at 6:10 pm. He announced that a quorum was present. He announced that Ms. Wolfe and Mr. Luckey are absent as they have meetings that conflict with the hearing date.

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 determined or certified as blighted.

BPRC Attendance: B. Twyman, L. Olsen, N. Eyrich, W. Cinfici, H. Urena

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

Mr. Olsen stated that the minutes from the August Determination Hearing and the September non-hearing meeting were distributed electronically. He asked if any committee member wished to make corrections or changes.

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Twyman, to approve the August Determination Hearing and September non-hearing meeting minutes as distributed. The motion was approved unanimously.

PROPERTIES TO BE DE-CERTIFIED

426 Lancaster Avenue – Certified in October 2014.

Ms. Butler stated that the property was rehabilitated and no longer meets the criteria for blight.

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Olsen, to de-certify 426 Lancaster Avenue. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Olsen congratulated the property owner for being responsible and rehabilitating the property.

PROPERTIES TO BE RELEASED

153 Walnut Street

Ms. Butler stated that this property was determined as blighted in 2009 and it is released from the process. No board vote is required.

Mr. Olsen stated that Ms. Butler will conduct the hearing.

Ms. Butler explained the hearing process for each property with representation and for the Consent Agenda.

DETERMINATION HEARING

801 N 9th St., Reading Recreation Co., 50 N 5th St., Reading PA, 19601, purchased March 2015

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner or a representative is not present.

Public Comment

No one stepped forward to provide public comment

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Twyman, to determine 801 N 9th Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

CERTIFICATION HEARING

213 Cedar Street, County Redevelopment Authority, purchased June 2016 – Tabled at May Certification Hearing

Ms. Butler stated that a representative of the Redevelopment Authority is present and they were provided with a property packet. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Tom Dachowski

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 Sept. 13, 2016
- Delinquent water charges \$17.28; Residential Water Service off Aug. 2010
- Gas service off
- Electric service off
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades – repair roof and trim; paint all surfaces; fix broken windows
- Codes – 1 Work Order, 4 NoV, Inspection scheduled for 12-2-16, \$53.63 unpaid, 2 QoL
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

Mr. Dachowski explained that the County Redevelopment Authority purchased the property with demolition plans so the empty lot can be leased for parking by the Century Hall at 831 Walnut Street. However, he stated that he was unsure when in 2017 demolition would occur.

Mr. Twyman inquired if the County has a standard operating procedure for the demolition process. Mr. Dachowski said that when funds for the demolition are identified, bids for the demolition go out and the process moves forward. He noted that multiple demo projects are planned in 2017.

Ms. Butler inquired if CDBG funds pay for demolitions. Mr. Dachowski stated that he is unsure about the funding source for the demolition projects planned.

Mr. Cinfici questioned if the County plans for demolition when the property is purchased or if the condition of the property is assessed prior to making the demolition decision. Mr. Dachowski stated that the County does evaluate the condition of the property first and in this case demolition is warranted.

Mr. Eyrich inquired if the certification of the property will interfere with the plan to demolish the property. Mr. Dachowski expressed the belief that the certification may interfere.

Public Comment

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Ms. Morrison

Evelyn Morrison, of Church Street, expressed the belief that the committee should hold all property owners accountable and to the same standard.

Mr. Eyrich moved, seconded by Mr. Twyman, to determine 213 Cedar Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

318 McKnight Street, Angel Nazario, 245 W. Oley St, Reading PA, purchased May 2016

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is not present but he is represented by his mother, who was provided with a property packet. She stated that Rolando Vasquez, of Integrity Construction, will be speaking for the property owners. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Lissette Chavalier.

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 Sept. 13, 2016
- Delinquent water charges of \$156.25; Residential Water Service on

- Gas service off
- Electric service on
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades – repair roof and front façade, repair windows and doors
- Codes – 1 Work Order, 1 NoV, Placard unlawful 2015, \$1503.57 unpaid, 2 QoL indoor furniture, 1 QoL trash
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

Ms. Chavalier stated that the utilities have been reconnected and the rehabilitation of the property is completed. The property is not rented out to a tenant. Ms. Potts confirmed that the property is fully rehabilitated.

Public Comment

Evelyn Morrison, remaining under oath, of Church Street, asked Ms. Chavalier if her son was ever referred to another agency that could provide CDBG funding to assist with the rehabilitation. Ms. Chavalier stated that her son did not require assistance.

Mr. Olsen suggested that the board consider removing the property from the process.

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Twyman, to remove 318 McKnight Street from the process. The motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Olsen congratulated the property owner for doing a great job with the property.

130 South 12th Street, Moyo Ndodana, 1804 Pennland Ct., Lansdale PA 19446, purchased Mar 2015

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Ndodana.

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner was provided with a property packet.

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 Sept. 13, 2016
- Delinquent water charges of \$1961.17; Residential Water Service off June 2011
- Gas service off
- Electric service off
- Delinquent Taxes \$1991.63 2015-2016 City County
- Trades – Fix roof, gutters and downspout
- Codes – 1 Work Order, 2 NoV, Inspection scheduled 12-9-16, \$2742.50 unpaid, 19 QoL trash, 2 QoL Weeds, 1 QoL indoor furniture
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

Mr. Ndodana stated that he plans to repair the exterior before making further interior improvements. He stated that he plans to fix the roof next. He stated that he is on a payment plan to pay down the delinquencies.

Mr. Cinfici inquired about the plan to address the sidewalk problems. Mr. Ndodana stated that he will address the sidewalk and take down the broken awning.

In response to a question from the board, Ms. Potts stated that the most critical issue to address is the roof.

Mr. Eyrich and Mr. Urena inquired about the timeline for the roof repair. Mr. Ndodana stated that he plans to have the roof repaired by November 15, 2016.

Public Comment

No one responded when the public comment period was opened.

Mr. Eyrich suggested tabling the property as the inspection is scheduled for early December.

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Cinfici, to table 130 South 12th Street until the Spring Certification hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

421 N 2nd Street, Our City Reading, 4500 Perkiomen Ave, Reading PA 19606, Purchased Feb 2003

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is not present; however, Our City Reading emailed Ms. Kelleher this afternoon asking the board to remove the property from the process as demolition is planned. A copy of the email was distributed.

Ms. Kelleher suggested moving the property through the process, as the property can be removed if demolition occurs.

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 Sept. 13, 2016
- Delinquent water charges of \$49.68; Residential Water Service off May 2013
- Gas service off
- Electric service off
- Delinquent Taxes N/A
- Trades – leaking roof, repair roof, gutters and downspouts, repair structural wood damage and all doors and windows

- Codes – 1 Work order, 4 NoV, Inspection scheduled 12/2/16, \$54.63 unpaid, 2 QoL weeds
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

In response to a question, Ms. Kelleher replied that Our City Reading purchased the property in 2003.

Public Comment

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Carlita Del LaRossa.

Ms. Del LaRossa stated that she owns the property next to 421 N 2nd St. and she described the problems 421 N 2nd Street creates for her property such as the leaking roof. She stated that the Property Maintenance Inspector instructed her to make all the required repairs to her property within six (6) months and she questioned why 421 N 2nd Street is treated differently.

Ms. Morrison (remaining under oath), of Church Street, noted the millions of public dollars Our City Reading received over many years to rehabilitate blighted properties. However, they created a health and safety issue by ignoring this property. She expressed the belief that it is a sin for Our City Reading to own this property and do nothing when they are provided with public funds.

Mr. Eyrich read the email distributed aloud. Mr. Cinfici expressed the belief that the request via email is insufficient and that a representative of Our City Reading should be at the hearing

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Twyman, to certify 421 N 2nd Street as blighted. The motion was approved unanimously.

834 Elm Street, Louis Anthony Carambot, 215 N 13th Street, Reading PA, purchased October 2015 – Tabled at May Certification Hearing

Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Carambot.

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner was provided with a property packet.

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 Sept. 13, 2016
- Delinquent water charges of \$153.77; Residential Water Service off Feb 2012
- Gas service off
- Electric service on

- Delinquent Taxes \$625.76 2016 City County
- Trades – windows boarded, fix exterior woodwork
- Codes – 2 Work Orders, 2 NoV, Placard unlawful 4/13, \$1436.81 unpaid, 5 QoL weeds, 3 QoL trash, 1 QoL indoor furniture
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

Mr. Carambot stated that he submitted a rehab plan at the request of the Property Maintenance Inspector and he pulled Building/Trades permits in July. He will be pulling electrical permits next. He stated that he plans to renovate the first two (2) apartments in this four (4) unit building within 4-6 months. He explained that he recently sought assistance from investors and a title search uncovered a \$50K mortgage lien on the property. He explained dealing with the lien slowed his progress, but he wants to continue working to clear the title and rehabilitate the property. He stated that to date he cleaned out the trash and secured the rear of the property. He stated that the building does have a zoning permit for four (4) units and he requested additional time.

Public Comment

No one responded when the public comment period was opened.

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Twyman, to table 834 Elm Street until the Spring Certification hearing. The motion was approved unanimously.

833 Green Street, Deleon Rupert Moreno, 835 Green Street, Reading PA, purchased Aug 2015

Ms. Butler stated that the property owner is not present but he is represented by Rolando Vasquez, of Integrity Construction and he was provided with a property packet. Ms. Kelleher administered the oath to Mr. Vasquez.

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 Sept. 13, 2016
- Delinquent water charges of \$1032.07; Residential Water Service off June 2012
- Gas service N/A
- Electric service on
- Delinquent Taxes \$2284.24 2013-2016 City County
- Trades – repair front porch roof and floor, repair all exterior woodwork, replace all windows
- Codes – Rehab plan submitted, Placard unsafe 2014, \$150 unpaid
- Delinquent Trash and Recycling – no response

Mr. Vasquez explained that the delay in rehabilitating the property was caused by the architect's failure to complete the plans for the property. Mr. Herrera, the architect, now says the plans will be completed within two (2) weeks and he spoke with the Building/Trades Inspector about the requirements. He requested more time.

Mr. Eyrich reminded Mr. Vasquez of his promises to begin the project at the August hearing. Mr. Vasquez explained that the delay is the fault of the architect.

Mr. Cinfici pointed out that the property owner could have taken some steps in the meantime to secure the property by boarding up the windows and the hole in the wall.

Mr. Twyman noted the need for the property owner to take responsibility.

Public Comment

Evelyn Morrison, remaining under oath, of Church Street, asked Mr. Vasquez if the building was inspected before he was hired by the property owner. Mr. Vasquez stated that the architect was retained on his recommendation; however, he was unaware of Mr. Herrera's workload problems.

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Twyman, to certify 833 Green Street. The motion was approved unanimously.

Consent Agenda

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

2. 356 McKnight Street, Rodney Hayes, 432 Schuylkill Ave, Reading, Purchased Dec 2001

4. 648 Tulpehocken Street, Charles and Gloria Cottoman, POB 854, Seaford, DE, 19973, purchased April 1995

5. 1500 Fairview Street, Michael & Jessica Lark, 737 N Lewis Rd., Royersford PA 19468, purchased Sept 2006

6. 1821 Perkiomen Ave, Dale & Davilyn Wentzel, 1821 Perkiomen Ave., PA 19606, purchased Sept 1985

7. 218 Carroll Street, Ibrahim Zok, 218 Carroll St, Reading PA, purchased Sept 2000

8. 1330 Greenwich Street, Donald Heckman, 55 Basket Rd., Reading PA, 19606, purchased Feb 1993

9. 752 Schuylkill Ave., Lorenzo Luis, 619 W 179th St., Apt 13, NY, NY 10033, No deed date provided

10. 319 McKnight Street, Flores Manuel, 837 McKnight Street, Reading, 19601, purchased Sept 1998

12. 2254 Northmont Blvd., Juan Lopez-Ramos, 7 Connecticut Ave, Stamford CT 6902 purchased Dec 2008

14. 632 S 10th Street, Herbert Lee Morrison, 1040 Penn St Apt 112 Reading Pa 19602,

purchased Oct 1991

15. 1825 Alsace Rd, Angelo & Patricia Promutico, 1825 Alsace Rd., Rdg., PA 19604, purchased Dec 1998

18. 1010 Washington Street, Alesia Bell & Brian Harris, 1010 Washington Street Reading, purchased Nov 2000 – Tabled at May Certification Hearing

19. 619 Clinton Street, Maribel Gonzalez, 257 Perry Ave., Greenacres, FL, purchased Sept 2015 – Tabled at May Certification Hearing

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 September 13, 2016 and/or posted on October 12, 2016.

- 2. 356 McKnight Street** – Delinquent water \$5511.02, Water off June 2011, Delinquent taxes \$2831.60 2013-16 City, County, School; Electric off, Gas off, Trades – repair roof, trim, windows and doors; Codes – 4 NoV, Never Inspected \$35 unpaid, 1 QoL weeds
- 4. 648 Tulpehocken Street** – Delinquent water \$3723.65, Water Off Dec 2012; Delinquent taxes \$2851.56 2013-16 City, County, School; Electric off; Gas off; Codes – 1 Work Order, 1 NoV, Placard unlawful, \$2193.75 unpaid; 8 QoL Weeds, 1 NoV, Placard unlawful, \$2193.75 unpaid, 8 QoL weeds, 4 QoL Trash, 1 QoL snow
- 5. 1500 Fairview Street** – Delinquent water \$3410.54, Water off July 2014, Electric off, Gas off, Trades – repair damaged windows and paint exterior wood, Codes – 1 NoV, 3 Work Orders, Placard unlawful, \$2726.97 unpaid, 9 QoL weeds, 2 QoL trash
- 6. 1821 Perkiomen Ave** – Delinquent water \$1812.77, Water off March 2013, Delinquent taxes \$1095 2016 City, County, Electric off, Codes – 1 NoV, never inspected, unsecured, 2 QoL trash, 2 QoL weeds
- 7. 218 Carroll Street** - Delinquent water \$2939.86, Water off March 2013, Delinquent taxes \$3497.45 2015-16 City, County, Electric on, Gas off, Trades – repair foundation and paint wood trim, Codes – 4 NoV, Placard unlawful, burst pipe in basement, \$875 unpaid, 3 No Show, 13 QoL trash
- 8. 1330 Greenwich Street** - Delinquent water \$5993.04, Water off March 2009, Delinquent taxes \$3206.76 2014-16 City, County, School, Electric on, Codes – 1 Work order, 4 NoV, Never inspected, 1 refusal, \$502.38 unpaid, 3 No Show, 5 QoL weeds
- 9. 752 Schuylkill Ave.** - Delinquent water \$7618.54, Water off March 2013, Delinquent taxes \$3719.72 2014-16 City, County, Electric off, Gas off, Trades, fix roof, gutters, downspouts, Codes – 1 Work order, 3 NoV, 2 No Show, \$189.25 unpaid, unsecured, 4 QoL weeds, posted for black mold
- 10. 319 McKnight Street** - Delinquent water \$4384.77, Water off March 2014, , Electric off, Codes – 1 NoV, never inspected, unsecured, 2 QoL trash, 2 QoL weeds
- 12. 2254 Northmont Blvd.** - Delinquent water \$1183.45, Water off June 2016, Electric off, Gas off, Codes – 2 NoV, passed inspection, \$1070 unpaid
- 14. 632 S 10th Street** - Delinquent water N/A, Water off February 2013, Gas off, Codes – 2 NoV, never inspected, \$145 unpaid, 2 QoL trash, 1 QoL weeds

15. 1825 Alsace Rd. - Delinquent water \$12430.64, Water off August 2014, Codes – 2 NoV, Inspection scheduled 12-16-16, unsecured, 4 QoL weeds, \$435 unpaid

18. 1010 Washington Street - Delinquent water \$1858.01, Water off July 2015, Codes – 1 NoV, 1 No Show, \$150 unpaid, Inspection scheduled 11/21/16

19. 619 Clinton Street - Delinquent water \$1430.40, Water off September 2016, Delinquent taxes \$876.24 2015 School, 2016 City, County, Gas off, Trades – fix roof, framing, gutters and downspouts, replace windows and doors, Codes – 2 NoV, 5 Work orders, \$1189.70 unpaid, 2 QoL trash, 3 QoL weeds

Public Comment

None.

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

Other Business

No other business was brought forward. The next cycle will begin in spring 2017.

Mr. Urena moved, seconded by Mr. Cinfici, to adjourn the hearing.

Respectfully submitted by Linda A. Kelleher CMC, Secretary