

**BLIGHTED PROPERTY REVIEW COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
October 24, 2019**

The regular meeting of the Blighted Property Review Committee (BPRC) was held on Thursday, October 24, 2019 at 11:30 am in Council Chambers of the City of Warren Municipal Building, with Ray Pring, Chair presiding.

ROLL CALL

Members present included Ray Pring, Denise Whipp, Greg Fraser, Rodney Wren and David Cantrell. Also, present were Terry Williams, Director of Codes, Permits & Recreation Services, Ken Hinton, Code Official, Jessica Roudybush, Code Official and Ellen Nelson, BPRC Recording Secretary.

WELCOME TO NEW COMMITTEE MEMBER

Mr. Pring welcomed Fire Chief Rodney Wren to the committee.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS

Josh Cotton, Reporter for Times Observer

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon a motion by Mr. Fraser and a second by Ms. Whipp, the minutes of the July 25, 2019 meeting were unanimously approved with one spelling correction.

CORRESPONDENCE

No correspondence received

PROPERTIES UNDER CONSIDERATION OF 2ND DECLARATION OF BLIGHT

500 Market Street. Mr. Hinton reported that the property was sold to Manuel Rebecchi. SBG Law Office provided a copy of a letter signed by Mr. Rebecchi acknowledging that this property has been declared blighted and that he has twelve (12) months from the date of closing to complete sufficient renovations to have the blight designation removed.

Mr. Hinton will forward a copy of the First Declaration of Blight letter to Mr. Rebecchi as well as any notices of violation. Mr. Fraser requested that copies should also be sent to SBG Law Offices and that Mr. Hinton find out when the closing date is so that BPRC will know when the clock starts for the 12-month renovation period. Mr. Hinton will also invite the new owner to the next BPRC meeting or offer for him to attend via phone.

Mr. Pring tabled action on 500 Market Street until the next meeting.

204 E. Fifth Avenue. Ms. Williams stated that this property was sold to a neighbor who has demolished the structure and has plans to expand their existing building and parking lot. The blight condition has been eliminated.

Mr. Cantrell made a motion to remove 204 E. Fifth Avenue from the blighted property list. Mr. Fraser seconded the motion that passed by unanimous vote.

602 Conewango Avenue. Ms. Williams stated that the first declaration of blight was declared in July. The letter for first declaration of blight was signed at this meeting by Mr. Pring and will be mailed to the owner.

Mr. Pring asked if there are any changes. Ms. Roudybush replied that the grass was cut for about a month but then stopped. Ms. Williams added that the Codes Dept. has received a number of complaints regarding this property. Ms. Roudybush has had several parties interested in purchasing the property.

Ms. Whipp asked if this property owner had called in to speak to the BPRC. Ms. Roudybush replied that the owner had attended the April meeting and told the committee that he planned to rehabilitate the property but there has been no progress.

Mr. Pring tabled action on 602 Conewango Avenue until the next meeting since the first declaration of blight letter was just being mailed.

PROPERTIES UNDER CONSIDERATION OF 1ST DECLARATION OF BLIGHT

100 W. Third Avenue (East Street School House Apts., Inc.) Mr. Hinton stated that Mr. Huck is now the full owner of this property. Mr. Huck told Mr. Hinton that he is looking to get a quote for asbestos removal. Mr. Hinton said that there are no major issues with the structure but all criteria for blight remain.

Ms. Williams said that plans continue for the building to be demolished. Mr. Hinton added that the intent is for Mr. Huck to build either one or two structures to sell and retain a portion of the land to expand his own yard. Mr. Pring asked if Mr. Huck had provided a timeline. Mr. Hinton replied that he is hoping to demo this winter.

Mr. Pring asked when the property was transferred from his father-in-law to Mr. Huck. Mr. Fraser said it would be a stock transfer and there would not be a public notice. Mr. Hinton thinks it was done in June. Mr. Pring would like to see some progress before the next meeting. Mr. Fraser stated that a first declaration of blight designation keeps the pressure on.

Mr. Fraser made a motion to proceed with first declaration of blight on 100 W. Third Avenue. Mr. Cantrell seconded the motion that passed by unanimous vote.

211 Monroe Street Ms. Williams asked the committee to table action on this property until proper notification could be verified.

Mr. Pring tabled action on 211 Monroe Street until the next meeting.

UPDATE FROM PLANNING COMMISSION/RDA ON BLIGHTED PROPERTIES

Mr. Pring stated that the Planning Commission has not met so there is no update. The next meeting is scheduled for October 30, 2019.

Ms. Williams updated the BPRC on the properties until review by the RDA. Several properties have been removed from their list for various reasons.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ms. Williams asked the BPRC members how they would like staff to proceed with bringing properties to them for review. What criteria would they like staff to use? Through discussion it was decided to allow staff to continue at their own discretion on what properties should come before the BPRC. Whether it is based on potential for improvement, fire hazard or complaints received.

It was agreed that the role of the BPRC is to prompt property owners to take responsibility to rehabilitate their properties and not to demolish structures.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Pring asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Cantrell made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Whipp seconded the motion.

The next meeting will be held Thursday, November 21, 2019 at 11:30.

Mr. Hinton stated that with the November being a week early due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, 30 days' notice will not be given for First Declaration of Blight, so those properties will not come before the committee until the December meeting.

Minutes prepared by Ellen Nelson