

**BLIGHTED PROPERTY REVIEW COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 25, 2018**

The regular meeting of the Blighted Property Review Committee (BPRC) was held on Thursday, January 25, 2018 at 11:30 am in Administrative Conference Room of the City of Warren Municipal Building, with Chair Ray Pring presiding.

Members present included Ray Pring, Denise Whipp, Greg Fraser and David Cantrell. Also attending were City Staff, Nancy Freenock, City Manager, Terry Williams, Director of Codes, Permits and Recreation Services, Ken Hinton, Code Official, Jessica Roudybush, Code Official and Ellen Nelson, Codes Dept. Secretary.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Upon a motion by Mr. Fraser and a second by Mr. Cantrell, the minutes of the November 30, 2017 meeting were unanimously approved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS

Laurie Sweet, regarding 103 Jefferson Street
Dan Clinton, regarding 705 W. Fifth Avenue
Shawna Buck, regarding 705 W. Fifth Avenue
Carl DeVlieger, regarding 20 Conewango Avenue
Josh Cotton, Times Observer

CORRESPONDENCE

None

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Mr. Fraser made a motion to retain the current slate of officers.

Chair, Ray Pring

Vice Chair, Denise Whipp

The motion was seconded by Mr. Cantrell and passed by unanimous vote.

PROPERTIES UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR 1ST DECLARATION OF BLIGHT

- A. **705 W. Fifth Avenue**. Mr. Hinton stated that owner, Dan Clinton, has finished the demolition for interior upgrades. Mr. Clinton plans to be finished with work in 6-8 months and has a purchaser, Shawna Buck who was in attendance at this meeting. There is still some electrical work to be done. Mr. Clinton was advised he needs permits. Applications were picked up January 25, 2018.

Mr. Pring asked for a time frame. Mr. Clinton stated that on February 15 the house will be gutted, electrical has not been checked. He needs to obtain a permit and then get work finished and inspected. February 20, the mechanical and plumbing will be done. Mr. Clinton added that he has had some setbacks and was tied up in court. Mr. Fraser asked what the time frame is to get a permit. Mr. Hinton replied 2-10 days to issue. Mr. Fraser asked if the permit is issued in 2 weeks would it be ready for an electrical rough-in inspection before the February meeting. Mr. Hinton did not think the electrical would be ready in time. Mr. Pring added that he is encouraged by the progress and that he has obtained

a potential buyer. Mr. Pring asked what the status will be at the next meeting in February. Ms. Williams stated that Mr. Clinton could have permits in hand by February.

Mr. Fraser made a motion to table this matter until the February meeting on the condition that Mr. Clinton has building permits in hand. Ms. Whipp seconded the motion which passed by unanimous vote.

- B. **103 Jefferson Street.** Ms. Roudybush stated that this structure has been unoccupied for at least 2 years. The exterior is in good condition. Water has been off since May 15 due to nonpayment. Porch and porch steps are not up to code and a notice of violation has been issued. Ms. Sweet's neighbor was in to pick up a building permit application for the porch but has not submitted the paperwork. The neighbor has taken down the fence so that is no longer an issue. There have been multiple complaints since May of 2016. Ms. Sweet was found guilty on October 25, 2016. DPW abated the clutter violation in the summer of 2017. The City has been mowing the property. Lawn care expense in the amount of \$600 has been accumulation but a lien has not yet been filed. The property was up for tax sale but the mortgage company paid the property taxes through 2015. 2016 taxes are now delinquent.

Mr. Pring asked what Ms. Sweet's plans are. Ms. Sweet replied that she gave money to the neighbor to obtain permits to fix the porch. Ms. Whipp stated that if the porch is repaired, the property is still vacant and has no water. She asked Ms. Sweet what she intends to do with the property once repairs are made. Ms. Sweet wants to sell it to the neighbor. Mr. Fraser asked if she will list with a realtor if the neighbor does not buy the property. Ms. Sweet said she would list the property.

Mr. Fraser asked Ms. Roudybush if it would help her do her job if she could see inside the house because from what we can see on the outside it's all minor issues. Ms. Roudybush said yes it would to see inside the house to make sure there are not additional issues that we are not aware of.

Ms. Sweet agreed to let Ms. Roudybush inside the house within the next four weeks so she can report back to the Committee at the February meeting.

Mr. Fraser made a motion to table this matter with the condition that Ms. Sweet allows Ms. Roudybush inside to inspect within the next 4 weeks. Ms. Whipp seconded the motion which passed by unanimous vote.

PROPERTIES UNDER CONSIDERATION FOR 2ND DECLARATION OF BLIGHT

- A. **20 Conewango Avenue.** Mr. DeVlieger reported that there are only 2 items left to be completed; the garage door on front of building and the soffit. He installed the garage door earlier today. There is also additional interior work. Ms. Roudybush stated that there were broken windows and Mr. DeVlieger replied that they are now fixed.

Mr. Pring asked what Mr. DeVlieger's time frame is to finish the soffit. Mr. DeVlieger replied that he could have it done in half a day if he has decent weather. Mr. Fraser asked if there are any pending property maintenance or safety issues and Ms. Roudybush replied that there are not. Mr. Fraser asked Mr. DeVlieger if he can commit to finish the soffit by February 21 and Mr. DeVlieger said yes.

Mr. Fraser made a motion to table action until the next meeting to allow the soffit to be completed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Cantrell and passed by unanimous vote.

- B. **1507 Pennsylvania Avenue East.** Ms. Roudybush stated that this is the former Uni-mart Property that was purchased by a neighboring property owner. The new owner has demolished the structure. Mr. Hinton inspected and issued an approved final inspection on January 24, 2018.

Ms. Whipp made a motion to remove this property from the Blighted Property list. Mr. Cantrell seconded the motion that passed by unanimous vote.

- C. **515 W. Fifth Avenue.** Mr. Hinton mailed the first declaration of blight letter. Mr. Fred Martin mailed a reply letter stating that he is not the owner of the property. There has been no action on this property.

Ms. Williams added that this property is in the Repository Sale in December, 2017 but there were no bids offered. Mr. Fraser asked if the appeal period had expired and Mr. Hinton replied that yes it has.

Mr. Fraser made a motion to move to second declaration of blight. Mr. Cantrell seconded the motion which passed by unanimous vote.

OTHER BUSINESS

- Ms. Nelson provided a list of the properties before the BPRC and the steps that have been taken on each. She will include actions taken by the Planning Commission and the Redevelopment Authority.
- Mr. Pring stated that we need to continue to add properties to keep the process moving. Mr. Hinton stated that he will present two more at the next meeting – 714 W. Fifth Avenue and 500 Market Street. Mr. Pring stated that Ms. Williams, Mr. Hinton and Ms. Roudybush need to decide their time constraints and not to overwhelm the RDA. He is happy with adding 2 properties at this time.
- A notice of violation was issued to Mr. Huck, owner of the former East Street School. Mr. Huck then fixed some windows. Mr. Huck stated that this is a bigger project than he anticipated when he purchased it. He has 3 options. Sell to a developer, partner with someone to convert to housing complex or demolish it. Not keen on demo but could build 2 houses and divide into 2 lots. Mr. Huck stated that he could get money from the slate roof and cut block foundation. The violation letter sparked the owner to move forward. To rehabilitate the structure

would be over a million dollars. Ms. Whipp asked if zoning would allow that kind of housing and Ms. Williams replied yes. The owner is not committed to any of these options at this time. Mr. Fraser suggested BPRC put pressure on the owner to do something. Mr. Hinton suggested letting the property maintenance aspect go forward to see how the property owner responds. After that BPRC can step in.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, Mr. Pring declared the meeting adjourned. The next meeting will be held Thursday, February 22, 2018.

Minutes prepared by Ellen Nelson