

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BERKS COUNTY BLIGHTED PROPERTY
REVIEW COMMITTEE**

September 24, 2024

Eileen Kastura, Chairman called the meeting of the **BERKS COUNTY BLIGHTED PROPERTY REVIEW COMMITTEE (BPRC)** to order at 2:35 P.M. on September 24, 2024. The meeting was held as a public meeting by way of the Zoom virtual platform and allowed for full Committee and public interaction during the meeting and hearings. The following Committee members were present during the meeting:

Eileen Kastura, Chairman
Denise Commings, Vice Chair
Commissioner Michael Rivera
Lee Olsen, AIA

Ronald Heim was absent. After Roll Call, Chairman Kastura declared a quorum.

Also in attendance were:

Pauline Klopp, Redevelopment Authority of the County of Berks
Joan E. London, Esquire of Kozloff Stoudt, P.C., Solicitor
Joshua Young, Code Enforcement Officer, Borough of Kutztown
William Frymoyer, Code Official, Cumru Township
Glenn Bertolet, Kraft Municipal Services (Code Official, Borough of Lenhartsville)
Jeffrey Hogg, Kraft Municipal Services (Code Official, Borough of Wyomissing)
Lura Bare (Member of the Public)
Marissa Bennett, Karasch (Court Reporter)

The minutes of the meeting of March 26, 2024 and July 23, 2024 meetings had been distributed to the members prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Commings, with a second by Mr. Olsen, to approve the minutes of the March 26, 2024 meeting. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously by the members present. A motion was then made by Chair Kastura, with a second by Mr. Olsen, to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2024 meeting. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously by the members present.

Under Old Business, Chairman Kastura announced the Determination Hearing for the property located at 63 Hemlock Road, Cumru Township. Solicitor London read into the record the referral by Cumru Township, the First Strike and Determination Hearing notifications, certifications of municipal officials of code violations and hazardous conditions on the property, which have continued unabated, and recent photographs of conditions on the property. Despite notices, which were made a part of the record, the property owner was not present, and no one appeared on behalf of the property owner. Mr. Frymoyer, on behalf of Cumru Township, advised that he had spoken with one of

the owners, who admitted that the roof leaks. Mr. Frymoyer also advised the Committee of neighbor complaints. Committee members, upon reviewing exterior photographs of the property's condition, and reviewing the documentation introduced into the record, expressed concern for the devaluation of adjacent and nearby properties. At the close of testimony and evidence, Ms. Commings made a motion to adjourn the determination hearing, with a second by Commissioner Rivera. Upon vote, the motion carried unanimously by the members present. A motion was then made by Chairman Kastura, with a second by Mr. Olsen, and the members present voted unanimously for a determination of the property as meeting three or more characteristics of blight contained in Berks County Ordinance No. 09-2014.

The following items of New Business were addressed:

a) A motion was made by Ms. Commings, with a second by Mr. Olsen authorizing the forwarding of a Second Blight Determination Resolution to the owner of the property located at 103/105 E. Main St., Kutztown Borough, Pennsylvania. The members present unanimously voted in favor of forwarding the Blight Determination Resolution.

b) A motion was made by Chairman Kastura, with a second by Mr. Olsen, authorizing the advertisement of a Determination Hearing for the property located at 102 E. Penn St., Lenhartsville Borough, Pennsylvania, with the hearing will be conducted at the next scheduled meeting on November 12, 2024. Discussion followed, during which Glenn Bertolet, Code Official for Lenhartsville, advised that a report from the Borough Engineer on the property would be forthcoming. The members present voted unanimously in favor of the advertisement and hearing.

c) A motion was made by Mr. Olsen, with a second by Commissioner Rivera, authorizing the advertisement of a Determination Hearing for the property located 1853 Old Lancaster Pike, Cumru Township, Pennsylvania. Hearing will be conducted at the next scheduled meeting on November 12, 2024. The members present voted unanimously in favor of the advertisement and hearing.

d) A motion was made by Ms. Commings, with a second by Commissioner Rivera authorizing the advertisement of a Determination Hearing for the property located at 1306 Penn Avenue, Wyomissing Borough, Pennsylvania. Discussion followed, and Jeff Hogg, Code Official for the Borough, reported that there had been no change in the condition of the property. The Borough will be posting the property, and will care for the yard. There has been no communication with an owner or responsible party. Hearing will be conducted at the next scheduled meeting on November 12, 2024. The members present voted unanimously in favor of the advertisement and hearing.

The Solicitor reported on four properties on which the Committee had taken action:

a) 264 Friedensburg Road, Mt. Penn Borough, Pennsylvania - Property has been sold, but no transfer paperwork or inspection has been completed to date.


b) 708 Chew Street, Hamburg Borough, Pennsylvania - This property has been posted as unfit for human habitation, and citations are pending, per communication with the Borough's Code Official.

c) 727 State Street, Hamburg Borough, Pennsylvania - This property has been posted as unfit for human habitation and citations are pending, per communication with the Borough's Code Official. Ms. Commings believes that this property has been listed for sale.

d) 2319 Fairview Avenue, Mt. Penn Borough - This property has been sold, but not yet inspected, per communication with the Borough's Code Official.

Chairman Kastura announced that the next Committee Meeting will be held on November 12, 2024. With no additional business items, a motion was made by Commissioner Rivera with a second by Chairman Kastura to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously by the members present, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:08 p.m.

BERKS COUNTY BLIGHTED
PROPERTY REVIEW
COMMITTEE



Ronald Heim, Secretary