

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

January 23, 2024

Eileen Kastura, Chairman, called the meeting of the **BERKS COUNTY BLIGHTED PROPERTY REVIEW COMMITTEE (BPRC)** to order at 2:32 P.M. on January 23, 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
Ronald Heim, Secretary
Commissioner Michael Rivera
Lee Olsen

Chairman Kastura declared a quorum with all members present.

Also in attendance were:

Joan E. London, Esquire of Kozloff Stoudt, P.C., Solicitor
Pauline Klopp, Redevelopment Authority of the County of Berks
Matthew McKeon, Esquire, MacElree Harvey, Ltd. (Attorney for Lisa Ellis, 264 Friedensburg Road)
Joshua Young, Code Enforcement Officer, Borough of Kutztown
Adam Bender, Code Official, Borough of Mt. Penn
Jeff Hogg, Kraft Municipal Group (Code Officials for Borough of Wyomissing)

The minutes of the meeting of November 14, 2023 had been distributed to the members prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Commings, seconded by Mr. Olsen, to approve the minutes with no changes, which carried unanimously of members present.

Under Old Business, a motion was made by Mr. Olsen, with a second by Commissioner Rivera, to send a Determination Hearing Notice and Letter to the owner of the property located at 103/105 East Main Street, Borough of Kutztown, which carried unanimously of members present.

Under New Business, a motion was made by Chairman Kastura, with a second by Vice Chair Commings for ratification of the advertisement placed in the Reading Eagle of the 2024 meeting dates for the Commission. The motion carried unanimously of the members present.

Chairman Kastura asked for updates from the Solicitor. Attorney London reported on the following properties:

2319 Fairview Avenue, Borough of Mt. Penn. At the November 2023 meeting, the Committee authorized a First Strike Letter be sent to the owner of the vacant, dilapidated property located at 2319 Fairview Avenue, Borough of Mt. Penn. On December 12, 2023, the Berks County Nonprofit Development Corporation, by resolution, authorized the filing of a Conservatorship Petition in the Court of Common Pleas of Berks County. The Committee members had questions about the conservatorship process, especially where the property had only recently entered the Blighted Property Program. To best answer the Committee's questions, Attorney London and Ken Pick will hold an information session on conservatorship laws and the court process for the Committee and other interested persons.

264 Friedensburg Road, Borough of Mt. Penn. Attorney Matthew McKeon, representing Lisa Ellis, property owner, was present, as was Adam Bender, Code Official for the Borough of Mt. Penn. Ms. Ellis is hospitalized and will not be able to go forward with remediation. As a result, as had been discussed in the November 2023 meeting, the blight certification process will go forward. A motion was made by Mr. Olsen, with a second by Mr. Heim, to certify the property as blighted. The motion carried unanimously of the members present.

708 Chew Street, Borough of Hamburg. Nothing to report.

727 State Street, Borough of Hamburg. The property has been sold at tax sale and Attorney London spoke with the new owner at the beginning of January. The new owner was awaiting confirmation of the tax sale by the court, and once the property is in his name will proceed with repairs. The new owner also spoke with the Borough Zoning Officer regarding repairs that need to be completed to bring the property into compliance with codes.

1554 Penn Avenue, Borough of Wyomissing. Jeff Hogg, Code Official, reported that the property had changed hands, and repairs were proceeding. Mr. Hogg reported that he spoke with the Borough Manager, and that the Borough is comfortable with the removal of the property from the Blighted Property program. A motion was made by Mr. Heim, with a second by Vice Chair Commings to remove the property from the Blighted Property Program. The motion carried unanimously of the members present.

A motion was made by Mr. Olsen, with a second by Vice Chair Commings to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously of the members present, and the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.

BERKS COUNTY BLIGHTED
PROPERTY REVIEW
COMMITTEE


Eileen Kastura, Chairman