

Minutes for the August 4, 2016 Vacant Property Review Board

Prepared by VPRB member Cathy Gauthier

Members present: Commissioner Spiegelman, Mr. Greaves, Mr. True, Ms. Gauthier, Mr. Nugent, Mr. Littlefield

Excused: Mr. Narcowich, Ms. Trujillo, Mr. Matteo

Also in attendance: Commissioner Schreiber

The meeting was called to order by Commissioner Spiegelman.

Commissioner Spiegelman thanked Mr. Greaves for preparing outline and flow check regarding draft process and steps needed to implement Blight determination. It was explained that this supplements the "vacant property" notification process per Ordinance 2097 (Chapter 126). Mr. Greaves provided an overview and discussion ensued about other material that will be needed to track the status of properties, including inspection responsibility, maintenance and building check list, violation notice procedures and other processes.

Mr. Nugent explained how the advisory boards in Pottstown and Norristown undertake blight inventories and has emailed information. Ms. Gauthier indicated she had found some information on the internet but not anything specifically related to templates that could be easily adapted to Abington. Mr. Nugent said he would resend information. Commissioner Schreiber asked if we had looked at past work done for portions of the Old York Road Corridor and Easton Road when the "blighted" designation was being considered for those properties (per the Board and former Assistant Township Manager Lahaza). She indicated she would give a set of the information to Ms. Gauthier. Commissioner Spiegelman indicated he would check with Assistant Township Manager Wehmeyer.

The waiver process was further discussed and Mr. Littlefield provided an update on properties that have been notified of their vacancy status. It was noted that Solicitor's input will be needed on questions raised by the board members, such as access to interior inspections. Commissioner Spiegelman will be the liaison with the Solicitor's office regarding legal questions.

Site visits to properties on list by members was encouraged. It was suggested that any person that is aware of the vacant status of a nonresidential business alert code enforcement so that a preliminary determination could be made and further tracked. There was no resolution regarding this matter.

Actions: Members are to review all materials/handouts prior to next meeting on September 1. Code Enforcement will draft property maintenance violation notices as appropriate. Ms. Gauthier and Commissioner Spiegelman will review past work completed on blighted properties.