

Abington Township Vacancy Property Review Board

Thursday, October 6, 2016
Commencing at 4:07 PM
Township Building Board Room

A. Start of Meeting:

In Attendance: John Spiegelman, Bob Greaves, Toby True, Lorena Trujillo, Cathy Gauthier, Shaun Littlefield

Excused: Larry Matteo, Jerry Nugent, Mike Narcowich

B. Minutes of the August 4, 2016 meeting were approved.

C. Meeting was called to order by John Spiegelman. Cathy Gauthier inquired if there was an official process set up to survey vacant properties. None in place currently; however, she referenced a 2006 blight study that was conducted for properties on Old York Road. The question was raised if the form used to assess those properties could still be used. Toby True did not believe there would be an issue.

D. John showed photos to the Board that were taken from a property maintenance inspection on several vacant properties conducted 9/16/16 with Larry Matteo, John Spiegelman and Shaun Littlefield. These photos were taken of the exterior building and lot deeded as 1933 Old York Road. Since there are actually three separately addressed buildings on this lot, Cathy asked which building address belonged to the former Midas; the building is addressed as 1921 Old York Road.

- a. Shaun stated two meetings were held to discuss the site's future with the current owner of the lot during the month of September with Larry Matteo.

E. Bob Greaves stated that blight issues and violations should be forced and impressed on owners. Cathy inquired as to who would write the notice of blight to a property owner. Toby said the Township, specifically Code Enforcement and not the Vacancy Board, should be sending the letter. Cathy brought up an example of a blight letter prepared by Northampton Township. Using the examples provided, Shaun will prepare a form letter to be reviewed by John Spiegelman and Larry Matteo. This letter will serve as the blight form template that will be sent to applicable vacant properties.

F. John asked if a property maintenance violation letter had been sent to the properties known as 1807 Easton Road & 1813 Easton Road. Shaun responded that there had not been; however, he would prepare one and send it to the owners on record.

G. John brought up the properties at 490 Tyson Ave & 2602 Jenkintown Road. Both of these properties belong to the same owners. A beer distributor was the former use at 490 Tyson Ave. Photos of the exterior site from the road trip as referenced earlier were shown to the Board. As the building still contains product, John will reach out to the Solicitor's office and/or the Liquor Control Board regarding the legality of a vacant building operating as a long-term storage facility.

H. John called for a motion to have a blight letter drafted and sent to the owners of the properties addressed as 490 Tyson Ave, 2602 Jenkintown Road and 1933 Old York Road. Toby seconded the motion.

- I. John introduced the start-up of the Retail Recruitment Subcommittee, comprised of members of the Economic Development Committee and members of the Vacancy Review Board. The first meeting of the subcommittee was held Friday, October 14th, 2016 at 7:30am in the first floor conference room of the Township building.

The next meeting will be held on November 3rd, 2016 at 4:00 pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:23 PM.