

AD HOC BLIGHT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 4, 2020

A meeting of the Ad Hoc Blight Committee was held on Tuesday, February 4, 2020 in the Second Floor Conference Room, City Hall, Manistee, Michigan. The meeting commenced at 1:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Kelly Greve, Susie Cooper, Kathryn Levy, Kathy Grabowski, Dennis Otto, Timothy Kozal (Committee Leader)

OTHERS PRESENT: Dan Korzeniewski, Patrick Bajtka, Dan Duchon

ABSENT: Shawn Waruszewski, Robert Hornkohl

DISCUSSION

The purpose of the meeting was to finalize what will be presented to the Manistee City Council Work Session on Tuesday, February 11, 2020. The PowerPoint presentation was distributed along with copies of the proposed amended blight ordinance.

The areas to present to Manistee City Council Work Session will include the following 5 priorities:

1. Establish and hire a part-time blight officer.
2. Amend the current blight ordinance.
3. Establish fines & costs for violations with fines & costs escalating if issue not resolved after first notice/citation.
4. Establish a rubbish collection twice a year for pickup of any and/or all unwanted items placed out for disposal.
5. Establish a Standing Committee for blight.
6. Urgent need to address the downtown boarded up businesses.

Reference the PowerPoint packet, discussion ensued regarding whether monies could be set aside annually for razing of blighted structures. Also discussed was costs associated with proposed annual trash pickup and the issue that Department of Public Works (DPW) incurs costs also when there is an annual trash pickup as DPW employees assist the refuse company. Discussion regarding the possibility of eliminating the once a month refuse pickup for large items if the annual trash pickup were to be instituted. Also mentioned was the possibility of current officers taking on extra shifts to address blight as opposed to hiring a part-time blight officer. Discussion ensued as to the safety concerns associated with the possibility of a non-uniformed/non-armed individual assuming blight reporting duties.

Discussion ensued as to the timetable for paying fines. It was noted that the courts can enter in the timetable and can allow additional time for payment.

The issue of renters and blight was discussed and how best to proceed with some of the issues that exist with rental properties and blight. Those issues discussed were whom to cite, renter or owner?, whom to notify, renter or owner?, is a building owner aware there is blight?

Issues with individuals wishing to report blight via the City of Manistee website were mentioned as it was reported that it's problematic and not user-friendly.

The matter of what happens if the Manistee City Council doesn't adopt the Ad Hoc Blight Committee findings, with the following being possibilities for the Ad Hoc Blight Committee:

1. Discuss how best to proceed if the Manistee City Council adopts only a partial list of the recommendations.
2. Create a standing committee for blight.

Others present made comments regarding ordinances being violated, structures that currently violate the ordinance, blight officer status and responsibilities along with the matter of tourism and blight being highly visible during high volume tourist visits to the city of Manistee.

Discussion ensued reference a renter's list and whether one exists, how current it is and where to obtain the list.

The matter of reaching out to Bay City, Michigan for information regarding details on the methodology of their successful blight department was mentioned.

Ad Hoc Blight Committee agenda:

Tuesday, February 11, 2020	Manistee City Council Work Session	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, February 18, 2020	Manistee City Council meeting	7:00 p.m.
Tuesday, March 3, 2020	Ad Hoc Blight Committee meeting	1:30 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 2:07 p.m.

Bridget Guillen
Police Secretary

PLEASE NOTE: The Ad Hoc Committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, March 3, 2020 at 1:30 p.m. has been moved to Wednesday, March 4, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.

