

**AD HOC BLIGHT COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF FRIDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2020**

A meeting of the Ad Hoc Blight Committee was held on Friday, December 18, 2020. The meeting was held remotely via video conferencing with real-time messaging available. The meeting commenced at 11:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Kelly Greve, Kathy Grabowski, Dennis Otto, Chief Glass (Committee Facilitator)

ABSENT: Andy Lee, Robert Hornkohl

OTHERS ATTENDING: None

DISCUSSION

Discussion ensued on the progress the Manistee City Police Department has made from May 2020 through the present date. Committee members liked the implementation of the blight districts and an officer being assigned to handle that district and any complaints associated with that district. Chief Glass discussed what has occurred to date, what went well and what we can possibly perform more effectively going forward. It was mentioned that blight is an effort issue and perhaps establishing community expectations and shaping those expectations would be beneficial.

The possibility of issuing a press release in February or March 2021 was discussed with the purpose of the press release informing citizens that blight enforcement is still occurring and what the requirements might be for resolving blight issues.

Chief Glass initiated discussion reference blighted structures and the hope is to do better than in previous years but blighted structures take time and money and oftentimes involve many different departments correlating efforts to work toward achieving an effective solution.

As the process is somewhat lengthy and involves many steps regarding blighted structures, Chief Glass would like to possibly remove the written requirement from the ordinance. The thought is this could potentially make the process more efficient.

The court system process once a citation is issued and a court appearance is given was introduced with the issue being if someone is cited and does not pay the citation there are no penalties that can be assessed. Also mentioned was the time aspect once a citation enters the court system and oftentimes that can be a lengthy process before the court renders a judgment.

The committee discussed the possibility of creating and/or identifying groups who might assist with blight efforts for individuals in the form of physical labor. Also, the need for identifying resources that someone might contact for assistance in regards to blight issues was discussed.

It was pointed out to the committee that the City of Manistee cannot recommend for profit groups, organizations or contractors for blight assistance; however, there are non-profits that might be able to

assist in some way. Volunteer organizations should be contacted to see how/if they can assist with blight issues.

Discussion ensued on demolishing structures and how which structures are chosen to be demolished. There is now money budgeted annually in the City of Manistee budget for demolition of city-owned blighted structures.

It is believed that rental properties constitute a majority of the blight issues. The City of Manistee currently has a contract with SAFEbuilt to inspect rental properties utilizing the SAFEbuilt checklist but that checklist may not be the most thorough way of indicating issues.

The River Street properties, known as the Rozmarek properties, was brought up. The buildings now have a hard date for completion or fees will be imposed if they are not completed. Other properties were discussed with the thought being that in 2021 there should be a shift in philosophy of moving toward production.

Members are actively being sought for the Ad Hoc Blight Committee and current members should actively recruit potential members.

The Committee conveyed their gratitude to Chief Glass for his efforts, passion and professionalism he has demonstrated thus far in handling blight issues.

RECAP

Blight progress to date.

Demolition money now in City of Manistee budget annually for demolition of blighted structures.

SAFEbuilt – rental inspections.

Court system process and timeline.

Importance of reaching out to volunteer organizations for assistance with blight issues.

Meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Submitted by:

Bridget Guillen
Police Secretary

