

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS & SAFETY
UNSAFE BUILDING ORDINANCE
VALPARAISO, INDIANA
AUGUST 8, 2018**

A Special Meeting of the Board of Public Works & Safety of Valparaiso, Indiana met August 8, 2018, at 3:00 p.m. in City Hall. Present were Bill Oeding, Steve Poulos and Attorney Patrick Lyp. Bill Oeding called the meeting to order.

Ethan Lowe addressed the Board. He has three properties to discuss under the City's Unsafe Building Ordinance. Vicki Thrasher, City Building Commissioner, has issued an Order to Demolish and Remove on each of three properties.

8 WAYNE STREET

The property owner is James Youngjohn. His attorney is Michael Deppe. Neither were able to attend the hearing. However, Attorney Deppe was reached by phone and spoke with the Board for this hearing. He acknowledged he does not dispute the proceedings. He has, however, asked for 30 additional days to have the work completed. There are issues with IDEM that need to be completed. The building needs to be secured until demolition occurs.

Tabs 1 through 4 are accepted by the Board of Works in making their determination.

Steve Poulos moved to approve the Order and Findings for 8 Wayne Street with an extension of 30 additional days granted to complete the work, seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved. The date for completion of the demolition is on or before September 7, 2018.

1009 NORTH CALUMET

The property owner of the subject property is The Porter County Cancer Society, Inc. It appears they have abandoned the property. Attempts have been made to contact representatives to see what their intention is. This has not been successful. The property is owned free and clear. Legal Notices have been published. No one is in attendance at this meeting on behalf of The Porter County Cancer Society.

Vicki Thrasher, City Building Commissioner, advised complaints started on this property in 2016. There have been multiple calls to police regarding people entering the building. This has been determined to be a nuisance. There is no electric or gas to the building. The City has cut the weeds down on the property a couple of times.

There is a white garage located on the rear of the property. This is a shared garage. It is located on this property and the property to the north. The owner of the property to the north has objected to its being demolished. The garage is not a part of this proceedings. The Porter County Cancer Society has been administratively dissolved by the Indiana Secretary of State. The City has tried to reach the officers listed on the Business Information site of the Secretary of State's web page. The Porter County Cancer Society is a non-profit so there are no taxes accruing on this property. The City could file a lawsuit and

try to sue for the cost of demolition. The other way would be to lien the costs on the property tax bill. If they are not collected, then it would go through the tax sale process.

Tabs 1 through 5 are accepted by the Board of Works in making their determination.

Steve Poulos moved to approve the Order and Findings for 1009 North Calumet, seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved.

156 INSTITUTE STREET

The property owner of the subject property is James P. Raber. James Raber was present for the hearing. This is a single family residential home. It has been on the City's list of Code Enforcement for several years. The owner has been contacted with no response. The City has received numerous complaints from neighbors. This has been determined to be an unsafe and abandoned building. There is a mortgage. The payments are current. Mr. Raber filed bankruptcy a number of years ago. Normally there is a stay in place when a person has filed bankruptcy. There is an exemption that applies to a government entity working to maintain the health, safety and welfare of citizens.

Enforcement on this property began in 2011. There has been no improvement on the property since then. Neighbors have reported the property is vacant. Photographs presented to the Board were taken on Monday August 6, 2018. There have been two different vehicles stored on the property.

James Raber explained the person who had been living in the residence went to jail. It was his car that got towed. Mr. Raber is in Chapter 13 Bankruptcy. A substantial amount of his check is taken by the Court to pay bills. He has not had funds available to repair the house. The Bankruptcy is done in November and he intends to put the freed-up money towards fixing the house. His wife has hired a service to clean the property. Up until two years ago he lived in the residence. The roof is eight years old. The paint is chipping off the cedar siding. He intends to get a different siding. The mortgage balance is \$101,000. It is a four-bedroom home. It is a strong structure. The house was built in 1893. There are steel beams in the basement. The utilities have been on at the house and have been in his name.

Mr. Raber has not responded over the years to the City's Notices. Neighbors have reported they have not seen anyone going in or out of the property. Therefore, the City believes the property is abandoned.

Neighbors:

Sandra Zierz – 155 Institute. He is a good neighbor, but he says he is going to do things and it never gets done. The property is not maintained.

John Albers – 401 Lafayette. The property is not maintained. If he has been living there it is not on a regular basis. There are people interested in purchasing the property.

Tim Daly – 309 Lafayette. He doubts the utilities are turned on at the property. The person who owns the car stored on the property was arrested for DUI and went to jail. He feels it has hurt property values in the neighborhood.

Sandra Zierz – 155 Institute. The last time she was in the home the walls were stripped down to the studs.

Tabs 1 through 4 are accepted by the Board of Works in making their determination. James Raber acknowledged tabs 1-4.

Steve Poulos moved to approve the Order and Findings for 156 Institute and proceed to have the building demolished, seconded by Bill Oeding and so approved.

Ethan Lowe and Patrick Lyp will check on the Bankruptcy Court and any Stay that is in effect.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned.