

CITY OF EAST CHICAGO
BOARD OF PUBLIC SAFETY

BOARD MEMBERS

Milton Reed, President
Richard Trembczynski, Vice President
Thomas Davis, Member

Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, June 26, 2023 @ 6:00 p.m.

Reported for Fissinger & Associates
By: Lisa Pena

CALL TO ORDER: 6:06 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL: Present: Richard Trembczynski, Thomas Davis

STAFF PRESENT: Richard Morrisroe, Olga Cosme, James Portalatin, Kevin Smith

MINUTES: Regular Meeting June 12, 2023

Motion to approve June 12, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes made by Thomas Davis. Second by Richard Trembczynski.

Questions/Comments: None.

Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

CORRESPONDENCE: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolutions

Resolution 2023-37, 3813 Hemlock and Release of Lien

1 Motion to approve Resolution 2023-37 and Release of Lien made
2 by Thomas Davis. Second by Richard Trembczynski.

3 Questions/Comments: None.

4 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
5 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

6 Building Department

7 MR. TREMB CZYNSKI: Building Department.

8 MR. SMITH: Good evening, Board. Kevin Smith on behalf
9 of the Building Commissioner, Mr. Portalatin, who is also
10 here present.

11 We have several matters before the Board regarding
12 Notices of Demolition.

13 I would note for the record that every property
14 that you'll hear tonight has been properly noticed both
15 through certified mail and by publication in the Northwest
16 Indiana Times pursuant to statute. So we do have notice on
17 all of these.

18 Several of the owners or representatives are here
19 present. And when they hear their property called, they're
20 welcome to come up.

21 But on the ones that they aren't present we request
22 that the order be entered. I will request the relief at the
23 end on all these.

24 First property is 4823 Alexander which is tab 1 in
25 the book. The owner is listed as Enrique Jon Argumendo who
lives on Homerlee Avenue.

It's a two-story brick structure, apartment
upstairs. It's in deteriorating condition. Especially the
brickwork. The windows appear open to the elements and some
are boarded up.

I don't believe anyone is present for 4823
Alexander. Last call. 4823 Alexander.

No one is present on that one. And at the end
we'll request that the order be affirmed as presented.

4854 Alexander. This is in the Brooks Family

1 Trust. It's my understanding according to Mr. Portalatin
2 that a permit has been applied for. And he is requesting a
status for 8/28.

3 4409 Arbutus Lane. This is owned by Mr. Luis
4 Guerra. And it is also a property in which a permit has been
requested. And Mr. Portalatin is requesting a status on this
property for 8/28 of 2023.

5 3827 Butternut. Is Mr. Casillas still here, James,
6 Jose Casillas. He must have left. He's the contract
purchaser.

7 James, what did you decide on this property?

8 MR. PORTALATIN: We would enter the Demo Order.

9 MR. SMITH: On this property due to the condition we
10 would request that the Order of Demolition be entered.

11 By the way it's a two-story structure with multiple
12 units. And it appears to be in significant disrepair as
represented in the photos under tab 4.

13 4003 Deodar Street, garage only. Is anyone present
14 on this?

15 MR. PORTALATIN: The owner did give me a call. We would
enter the Demo Order. She may participate in the 50/50.
16 She's not sure about that.

17 MR. SMITH: The garage is in disrepair under 4003 Deodar
in your packet. There's a collapsed roof and siding is
18 peeling off.

19 Next one is 3808 Drummond. I believe Mr. Michael
Lewis is here. He is here. Come on up.

20 His mother, Doris Irene Fields, passed away in '19.
21 However he's been trying to get the property in his name. He
does live there.

22 MR. LEWIS: Correct.

23 MR. SMITH: It's a one-story brick structure with
24 collapsing roof.

25 This was a demolition that was under a Demolition
Order back in 2018. But it didn't get knocked down. So it's

1 up again for your consideration.

2 The rear of the structure shows the roof in
3 disrepair with a boarded up back window. Garage is in bad
4 condition, open to the elements.

5 Mr. Lewis and I had a conversation outside. He is
6 trying to get the property in his name and fix it up.
7 However I've explained to him that our position would be that
8 the Demolition Order be entered.

9 Mr. Lewis, do you want to address the Board in any
10 way or are in agreement with that? Do you understand what's
11 going on?

12 MR. LEWIS: Yes.

13 MR. SMITH: You understand that you have to get the
14 property inspected and enter into a Rehab Agreement in the
15 next six to eight weeks?

16 MR. LEWIS: Yes.

17 MR. SMITH: So this is another one that we would request
18 the Order be entered.

19 Mr. Lewis, I just want to make sure. Do you have
20 anything you'd like to say to the Board? Thank you.

21 The next property is 3920 Elm Street. Enrique and
22 Blanca Villanueva, they live at 3733 Elm. They were here.
23 They're gone I believe. They're here.

24 Mr. Portalatin had significant conversation with
25 them explaining the process. Anything else?

MR. PORTALATIN: We're entering the Demo Order. But
they do want to enter into a Rehab Agreement.

MR. SMITH: The Order will be entered. The Order is
being requested to be affirmed pursuant to the Building
Commissioner's request.

Mr. and Mrs. Villanueva, did you have anything you
wanted to address with the Board? This is your opportunity
if you would like.

They said that they wanted to go forward with rehab
which Mr. Portalatin is going to assist with. But we request

1 that the Order be entered as presented.

2 3727 Hemlock. Mr. Vela is present for the tax sale
3 purchaser NWI RE4, LLC.

4 This is a two-story property with the porch,
5 windows and roof in disrepair. There's also a disabled ramp
6 in the front of the house that is in disrepair. And back
7 porch is also in rough shape. The garage is boarded up
8 including some overgrowth and a collapsed roof.

9 I know that Mr. Vela indicated to both me and
10 Mr. Portalatin that his wish is to rehab the property or to
11 sell it.

12 I'm sorry. To sell it. If he is unable to sell
13 it, he will rehab it.

14 However our position today is that we request the
15 Order be entered as presented and affirmed.

16 I don't know if Mr. Vela is still here. Anything
17 else?

18 MR. PORTALATIN: No. We would conduct an inspection.

19 MR. SMITH: Good news on 4121 Ivy Street. The garage
20 has been demolished by the owner. Therefore we will be
21 dismissing our request for a Demolition Order today.

22 So thank you to the Lark Family for making sure
23 that garage was knocked down.

24 4219 Ivy Street, garage. Is Mr. Ortega here?

25 MR. PORTALATIN: So we would enter into the Demo Order.
And he would like to possibly participate in the 50/50
Program with the garage.

MR. SMITH: Mr. Ortega, are you in agreement with that?

MR. ORTEGA: Yes, sir.

MR. SMITH: Do you have anything you want to address
with the Board?

MR. ORTEGA: No, sir.

MR. SMITH: Thank you. 4832 Kennedy. I believe

1 Mr. Michael Smith is here.

2 It's my understanding that both his parents are
3 deceased. Mr. Smith who is on Social Security lives there.
4 He has had problems with people dumping stuff in the back.
5 Every time he cleans it up.

6 However we are concerned about the overgrowth, the
7 flat roof which is in disrepair and trash around the site.

8 It's a small one-story structure that sits off the
9 street. The grass has been uncut on several occasions. The
10 garage was already knocked down by the Board.

11 Mr. Smith I believe wants to address the Board. He
12 has indicated to me that he would like to fix it up. However
13 he doesn't have the funds to do so. And he would be without
14 another place to live without this property.

15 MR. MICHAEL SMITH: When my parents died, we tried to
16 keep it up. And after they tore down the (inaudible)
17 everybody just started dumping in the back.

18 I know that it needs to be fixed. But I can't
19 afford it right now.

20 MR. DAVIS: So you won't be able to do any work on it in
21 the next couple of weeks or anything?

22 MR. MICHAEL SMITH: No. I'm on Social Security. I am
23 on a fixed budget.

24 MR. SMITH: This is one of those situations that is not
25 easy. The problem from the City's perspective is that the
property continues to get things dumped on it. And I am not
blaming Mr. Smith for that. And the property is in
significant disrepair.

Again we understand that Mr. Smith has limited
means, but certainly inclined to fix it up. That's where we
run into this competing interest type of analysis where the
City is aggressively pursuing properties that are not kept
up.

For example the grass is not cut. The City has
been cutting the grass.

So we need to find some solution. I'm not sure
what that is going to be.

1 James, do you want to speak at all to this?

2 MR. PORTALATIN: James Portalatin, Building
3 Commissioner.

4 So this is a property that unfortunately is
5 constantly being dumped on. The grass, we constantly have to
6 cut there. So the property is not maintained.

7 This is one that is unfortunate as well. But we
8 have no other recourse but to allow the person to enter into
9 a Rehab Agreement to do the repairs that are needed or enter
10 the Demo Order.

11 Unfortunately I can't say that there's other
12 grants available or anything to that effect.

13 As it is Redevelop has a list. They're going
14 through the list. So it won't happen any time soon.

15 We could definitely conduct an inspection on the
16 property. And that's it.

17 MR. TREMBCZYNSKI: That would give him enough time?

18 MR. PORTALATIN: Because he would be afforded almost to
19 enter into a Rehab Agreement.

20 MR. SMITH: Do you want to set it for status?

21 MR. PORTALATIN: We would enter the Demo because we
22 obviously have to. Demolition as it is takes about 90 days.

23 MR. SMITH: If we enter the Order today, you probably
24 have close to that 90 days.

25 MR. PORTALATIN: You said you are on limited income as
well?

MR. MICHAEL SMITH: Yes.

MR. SMITH: So why don't we enter the Order. So
obviously you'll get another notice when it's up for bid. At
that point if you would like to show up for that Hearing
hopefully you'll have made some arrangements to relocate.

Thank you. Yes, sir, that's it. Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: May I? I operate Jake Homes. On

1 this situation what I'm requesting is can we go into a Rehab
2 Agreement. We will purchase the property and take care of
the rehab for him if you are okay with it.

3 MR. MICHAEL SMITH: Yeah.

4 MR. SMITH: You have to deal with Mr. Portalatin because
5 we're going to enter the Order tonight.

6 Next property is 4842 Kennedy Avenue. Miss Melissa
7 Ashford is here. She is the daughter of one of the owners,
Sandra Rias.

8 Also Mid First Bank was here, an attorney from
Indianapolis, Scott Hale. He indicated Mid First entered
9 into a Lone Occupation Agreement with the Rias. And she is
interested in doing the 50/50 Agreement.

10 However today we are going to request that the
11 Order be entered for demolition. And that should allow some
time for Melissa to work out the details of the Rehab
12 Agreement with the City.

13 Do you understand that?

14 MS. ASHFORD: Yes.

15 MR. SMITH: Do you have anything?

16 MS. ASHFORD: Yes. I have started the process of the
50/50.

17 MR. SMITH: 4728 Magoun. Is Galindo still here?

18 This is garage only. Miss Galindo has indicated to
19 me that she had an agreement with Canoa's Construction to fix
it up. And they just haven't been able to pull a permit yet.

20 I've explained to Miss Galindo that what will
21 happen today is we'll enter the Order. But we're not going
to move forward on it.

22 We'll enter the Order of Demolition. But on this
23 one we won't record it. And then we'll set it over for
status for 8/28/23 to see if the garage is done.

24 It should be done by then?

25 MS. GALINDO: Yes. They say one week to week and a

1 half.

2 MR. SMITH: That will be easy. We can set it for July
24 for status. July or August?

3 MS. GALINDO: Yeah.

4 MR. SMITH: July?

5 MS. GALINDO: Yeah.

6 MR. SMITH: We'll set it for 7/24. We'll set it for
7 status. By that time it will be done.

8 Do you have anything else you want to say to the
9 Board?

10 MS. GALINDO: No. Thank you.

11 MR. SMITH: Thank you. 4753 Melville Avenue. This was
12 a previous demolition in 2020. Owner is listed as David
13 Pennington.

14 As you can see by the photos it's a one-story
15 structure with overgrowth. The property is in significant
16 disrepair. Siding and roof also appear to be in disrepair.

17 No one appears. We request that the Order be
18 entered.

19 3431-33 Watling Street. The owner is listed as
20 Thomas Papierz of Grand Boulevard in East Chicago.

21 It's a commercial structure that appears to be
22 boarded up. It's a warehouse type structure made of cement
23 block.

24 No one appears I don't believe. We request that
25 the Order --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Maybe he's dying.

MR. SMITH: Well, no one appears on behalf of the
estate.

No one is here. We would request that the Order be
entered and affirmed as presented.

And lastly 5029 Wegg. The owner is listed as Luis

1 Guerra of Lafayette Street in Griffith.

2 It's a one-story wooden structure with a collapsing
3 porch, roof. Regular roof in significant disrepair. The
siding has been stripped off.

4 Overall the property is in significant disrepair.
5 The windows are open to the elements as presented in the
photos to the Board.

6 Based on its condition we would request that the
7 Order be entered. No one appears on behalf of that property.

8 That completes our list of the new properties. I
9 would request the relief that we requested of the Board as
I've gone through the properties.

10 That includes enter any Orders. In some instances
status dates. And I would request that be in the Order.

11 Motion to approve Building Department Report made by Richard
12 Trembczynski. Second by Thomas Davis.

13 Questions/Comments: None.

14 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
Opposed: None Motion Carries.

15 MR. SMITH: We have two Status Reports for the Board.
16 3702 Guthrie and 4001 McCook Street.

17 These are properties that have previously been
before the Board which we gave the owners an opportunity to
18 make some repairs.

19 Those have not occurred. Therefore based upon the
information and evidence presented to the Board previously,
20 we have photos, we would ask that the Board enter the Order
for Demolition as amended.

21 And that's it on both properties, 3702 Guthrie and
22 4001 McCook.

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1 Motion to approve Status Reports made by Thomas Davis.
2 Second by Richard Trembczynski.

3 Questions/Comments: None.

4 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
5 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

6 MR. SMITH: Thank you. And then last matter we have for
7 the Board is Order to Repair on 4845 Grasselli.

8 James, do you want to address the Grasselli
9 property?

10 MR. PORTALATIN: Yes. 4845 Grasselli, the property is
11 not kept. It's not a property at least on the exterior that
12 appears to need demolition. But the exterior of the property
13 there's constant dumping.

14 We need to have this Notice to Repair so that we
15 can then have a contractor go in and do what is needed to
16 that property because it is an eyesore at this point.

17 Motion to approve Order to Repair made by Thomas Davis.
18 Second by Richard Trembczynski.

19 Questions/Comments: None.

20 Roll Call: "All in Favor": All Abstain: None.
21 Opposed: None Motion Carries.

22 MR. SMITH: Thank you very much. That completes the
23 Building Department Report I believe. Thank you to the
24 Board.

25 OTHER/AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION: None

* Next Regular Meeting Date: Monday, July 10,
2023 @ 6:00 p.m.

Motion to adjourn made by Thomas Davis. Second by Richard
Trembczynski.

* Meeting ended at 6:33 p.m.

1 Approval of the Meeting Minutes of
2 Monday, June 26, 2023

3 Approved and Signed _____

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5 _____
6 Milton Reed, President

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8 _____
9 Richard Trembczynski, Vice President

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11 _____
12 Thomas Davis, Member

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14 _____
15 Olga Cosme, Board Secretary

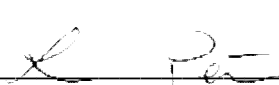
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C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lisa Pena, a competent and duly qualified court reporter, do hereby certify that I did report in machine shorthand the foregoing proceedings and that my shorthand notes so taken at said time and place were thereafter reduced to typewriting under my personal direction.

I further certify that the foregoing typewritten transcript constitutes minutes of said proceedings taken at said time and place, so ordered to be transcribed.

Dated at Portage, Indiana, this 4th day of July, 2023



Lisa Pena
Notary Public Porter County
Certified Shorthand Reporter
License Number 084-003483

