

The regular monthly meeting of the Lawrence Township Committee was called to order as advertised, and held in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act. Members present: Sheppard, Miletta, Bowman.

Following the pledge of allegiance, minutes of the December 1st, 19th, 13th, and 30th meetings approved, motioned Bowman, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote. Reports for the month of December accepted, motioned Sheppard, seconded Bowman, unanimous vote.

Demolition hearing for 16 East Avenue, Block 197, Lot 5. Assessed owner Walter Fisher. Solicitor Seeley stated the property is causing a public safety hazard. On December 30, 2021 he sent a letter to the assessed owner via regular, certified and overnight mail. Solicitor Seeley sworn in Mr. Wayne Shelton, Construction Official, to give testimony. Mr. Shelton stated the house appears to have been in this condition for some time. There is no back to the house, only 3 walls holding it up. The chimney was reported to be falling down. Fire Department went and placed yellow caution tape and reported the chimney leaning. Mr. Shelton had written the owner a letter on December 7, 2021 and has received no response from the owner. The house is only 1 block from the school. House was sold on November 5, 2020 and Mr. Shelton issued an AS IS SALE, NO CO, Needs Repairs/Rehab before use of property. The building is unsafe and in a school zone. The leaning chimney was taken down by public works for the safety of the public. Under N.J.S.A. 40:48-2.3A the Construction Official has the authority to condemn or demolish. Pictures of the house were presented to the committee. Bowman inquired if taxes have been paid. Should it be knocked down and the property cleared? Could this be done through the derelict housing program with the County? Miletta stated that a car went through the house previously. Mr. Seeley stated that the township could put a lien on the property for the cost associated with taking the chimney down and the work that will be done. Mr. Seeley stated substantial notice was given to the owner. Motion to proceed with demolition immediately Bowman, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote. The public works is able to remove house. Sheppard stated we needed to get quotes for the demolition. Quotes will be gotten so we can compare to price for lien on the property. Property has been vacant for 15 years. The Construction Office will contact utilities for confirmation they are shut off. Wayne will check the house to see if there is asbestos. Motion to get quotes by Bowman, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote. Sheppard to get a quote from Homan Contracting. Bowman will get a quote from Abrisco Enterprises. Mr. Seeley will notify the owner that the decision was made to demolish. Wayne will check for well on property. Well will need to be capped and cesspool will need to be pumped and filled.

Mr. Shelton spoke to the committee in regards to the concerns at 186 Main St. Owner is confirmed to be in prison. No CO, septic or water certification. No one is allowed to occupy the residence without a CO. Allegedly someone is living there. When Mr. Shelton went to residence for a CO inspection there were no smoke/co detectors, no heating, exposed electrical boxes, fire extinguisher was not the proper fire extinguisher. December 2, 2020 an electrical permit for reconnect was submitted. Lady who lived there called for inspections. When Mr. Shelton went to inspect it, it appeared like a house being renovated. Mother of owner called the office concerned for safety of the kids. Mr. Seeley stated we could evict for inhabitability. Not able to get them out of the residence since it is not landlord/tenant. Discussion on notifying DYFS for the residence being unsafe and inhabitable.

Mr. Shelton stated that he has a list of people owning houses and not communicating with us. They are 12 & 14 Franklin St., 7 Folsom Ave., 145 Main St. Letters have been sent regular and certified. Mr. Shelton requesting Mr. Seeley to send letters also. Mr. Shelton is able to fine them under the U.C.C. Attorney cost cannot be put on violation. Mr. Shelton to exhaust his efforts then turn over to Mr. Seeley. Mr. Shelton said he has had communication with Mr. Crist and Mr. Dominic. 242 Main St. needs a CO, owner living in house with no CO. 612 Ramah Rd. is being living in without a CO due to the septic. Owner paid a contractor but work didn't get done. Wayne will communicate with owner. Owner of 7 Folsom Ave. called to say someone was living in his house. State Troopers went there and there is nothing they can do. Mr. Shelton saw trucks backed up to house moving stuff out. They relocated to a residence owned by an attorney. It is registered as a rental. Approximately 1 year ago building inspector was called for a pool inspection at 38 Newport Rd. and noted construction going on. Zoning officer was notified. August 2019 owner stated that termite repair work was being done. A new apartment was being built. Needs a CO and change of use. Mr. Shelton advised the owner, Mr. Hyson, to go to the planning board. Owner went to the State and started an investigation with DCA against Mr. Shelton. All permits for 38 Newport Rd. go to Upper Deerfield, City of Millville, or City of Bridgeton. Mr. Shelton did issue a violation with penalties of \$1500 and \$500 a week for working without permits and living in residence without a CO. Mr. Shelton is requesting Attorney involvement. Mr. Shelton will create a file with all documentation and give to Mr. Seeley. It was also noted that the mailbox has been reposted saying 38 and 38A and there are also 8-10 cars being parked at the residence in the evenings.

940 Hogbin Rd. has an 80X80 building being built. It was framed and sheathing was put up with no building or zoning permits. Mr. Shelton put a stop work order on the building. The builder stated that he was not sure what the building was going to be. A violation was sent to the owner.

Qihe mushroom farm. Mr. Shelton drove by and saw work being done at the garage. Garage has been converted into an apartment. Mr. Bowman instructed Wendy, representative for Qihe mushroom farm, to come to the construction office and obtain permits for renovation.

Land Sale Offer for Block 104, Lot 31 in the amount of \$13,000 + \$400 conveyancing fee from Mr. Belland. Authorize sale to take place at February meeting motioned Sheppard, seconded Bowman, unanimous vote.

Public hearing as advertised, Ordinance No 2021-431, Road Opening Permit, hearing opened motioned Bowman, seconded Sheppard and receiving no public input, closed and the ordinance was adopted as motioned Bowman, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote.

Resolution 2022-15, Confirming Land Sale, Block 40, Lot 14 to Amber Hines and Nash Ridgeway, \$2,000. Motioned to approve Sheppard, seconded Bowman, unanimous vote.

Resolution 2022-16, Authorizing 2021 Budget Transfers. Motion to approved Bowman, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote.


Authorize payment of approved vouchers motioned Sheppard, seconded Bowman, unanimous vote.

Cumberland County Cooperative Purchasing System – Purchase and delivery of gasoline, 87 octane, unleaded regular diesel, Contract award to Riggins, Inc. Vineland. Motioned to participate Bowman, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote.

Committee Comments, Sheppard would like to get a subdivision of the property where the Road Department is located to be able to delineate and separate it.

Motioned to open to public Bowman, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote. Mr. Rudy Badger asked if there were any grants available. He was advised that the County has one for Septic. Mr. Badger also questioned why New Rd. was chosen to be changed to Scarlato Rd. and not a side street. Committee stated because of their business being located there and minimal residences on the road. Discussion had on the multiple times the name of the road has been changed. Also, Shaws Mill Rd. vs Saw Mill Rd. and the confusion was discussed.

Motion to adjourn Bowman, seconded Sheppard, unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned 9:25 pm.


Mary Harrar, Admin.
Assistant