

Housing Coordinator

Abraham Lincoln in speaking about progress, once said: *"I am a slow walker, but I never walk back"*.

I often have to remember that the revitalization of a City and economic growth is always a step by step process. However in 2013 we saw some encouraging trends and modest improvement on the Housing Front.

- In April, the number of properties taken by Tax Deed declined 20% from 2012, with an additional six properties repurchased during the statutory time period, reducing this number further to 35% fewer properties obtained by the City than the previous year.
- Additionally, there are indications that point toward the stabilization of the rental market within the City. Fewer units due to removal of substandard housing through the tax deed process, code enforcement and demolition, have pushed supply and demand toward equilibrium, resulting in greater demand for excellent units and higher rents.

2013 also brought about a new wave of community pride and creativity as community members weighed in on suggestions for the re-use of key properties, particularly in our visible downtown areas; resulting in the completion of the 3 Glen Ave park and municipal parking

area and plans for a Community Garden at 115 Mason St.

We continue to be grateful for the ongoing partnerships and relationships with local contractors, state and federal agencies as they support the work here in Berlin. A summary of those partnerships and accomplishments follow:

Neighborhood Stabilization continues...

The influx of \$4,590,060 in Federal Neighborhood Stabilization Grant funds for rehabilitation, awarded to the City of Berlin provided the impetus to address some of our most challenging neighborhoods in the past 7 years. Although this funding source was winding down in 2013, the partnerships formed with local investors and craftsmen continues to make its mark on our city. With the completion of 83 Mason Street under the Neighborhood Stabilization Grant, TKB Properties, LLC continued to invest privately, purchasing and rehabilitating 97 Main Street into luxury apartments and retail space and more recently has purchased and begun the rehabilitation of 590 Goebel Street. Many other private investors and citizens have also contributed to the improvement and beautification of their neighborhoods, and we are encouraged daily by the ongoing signs of improvement by individual homeowners and businesses.



NSP 1 - 81-83 Mason Street (Before and after revitalization)

Demolitions

The City has been unwavering in its commitment to address blight and substandard housing throughout neighborhoods. Budgeted municipal funds, Neighborhood Stabilization dollars, and an EDI-Special Projects grant, have enabled us to move forward aggressively

with the abatement and demolition of blighted housing. From 2007 to the present, **\$2,858,240.00** from these combined sources have contributed to the removal of **57 blighted buildings** (representing **178 Units**) in the City of Berlin.



3 Glen Avenue.... during



3 Glen Avenue... after



554 Hillsboro....during



554 Hillsboro... after

Reinvestment

Re-establishing our neighborhoods and community as a place that is desirable to live and work, must also incorporate re-investment and development. In 2013, we were pleased to see that many of our friends and neighbors wanted to do just that. Land from buildings

that had been demolished were purchased and merged by abutters, and other properties sold for re-development; many by local neighbors and contractors. Twelve (12) land parcels (two were merged prior to sale) and eleven (11) single & multi-family homes were sold and put back on the tax rolls.

REVENUES FROM PROPERTY & LAND SALES – 2013

LAND

<u>Map/Lot</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Assessment</u>	<u>Min. Bid</u>	<u>Bid Amount</u>
128-164	483 School St.	0.11	\$4,400.00	\$1,466.00	\$1,466.00
129-24	12 Cambridge St	0.05	\$6,100.00	\$2,034.00	\$2,039.00
119-394	729 & 735 Second Ave	0.34	\$16,200.00	\$2,500.00	\$2,505.00
130-146	216 Grafton St	0.06	\$6,600.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
120-273	360 High St.	0.11	\$9,300.00	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
114-08	702 Glen Ave	0.5	\$7,700.00	N/A	\$500.00
118-032	33 Gilbert St.	0.05	\$6,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
131-044	Hillsboro St.	0.11	\$8,700.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,100.00
131-045	Hillsboro St.	0.11	\$8,300.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,100.00
128-190	687 & 695 Main	0.23	\$7,700.00	\$7,700.00	\$8,013.00
					\$20,723.00

PROPERTIES

110-128	662 Sixth Avenue	0.11	\$46,900.00	\$9,380.00	\$13,333.00
118-029	79 Hamlin Street	0.03	\$36,100.00	\$5,415.00	\$5,500.00
119-357	119 Roderick Street	0.12	\$56,900.00	\$11,380.00	\$12,860.00
120-218	208 Collins Street	0.11	\$46,700.00	\$9,340.00	\$11,620.00
128-068	438 Hillside Avenue	0.21	\$55,500.00	\$13,875.00	\$25,110.00
129-131	621 Burgess Street	0.11	\$70,400.00	\$14,080.00	\$20,300.00
110-066	819 Fourth Avenue	0.11	\$74,600.00	\$11,190.00	\$12,025.00
117-55	180 Glen Avenue	0.23	\$40,400.00	N/A	\$10,000.00
130-377	590 Goebel Street	0.23	\$47,200.00	\$7,080.00	\$3,100.00
111-098	6 Rouleau Road	0.12	\$69,100.00	\$10,360.00	\$11,620.00
130-247	538 Burgess Street	0.11	\$51,400.00	\$10,280.00	\$10,280.00
					\$135,748.00

FY 2013 REVENUE FROM PROPERTY & LAND SALES:

\$156,471.00

Historic and Commercial Properties:

Extensive costs in clean-up and rehabilitation have been a deterrent toward re-investment in some of Berlins' larger historic properties. The former Notre Dame High School has been a shining "exception" and hopeful star on the horizon. A concerted 11-year effort by local, state and government agencies and the united voice of *Project Rescue Notre Dame*, is finally yielding results as renovations begin this fall for 33 adult living units.

Working with BIDPA, the City Manager and Community Development Director, we continue to assess economic & recreation opportunities and re-investment in other historic sites including the old City Court House, Bartlett School, former Bass Shoe

industrial site, Brown Research Buildings and Dummer Yard. The reduction in federal assistance for clean-up and rehabilitation will demand greater creativity and innovation as we move forward. I am confident in the success of Berlins' future, and honored to work alongside the staff, council and citizens whose heart and determination continues to be unwavering.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda White

Housing Coordinator