

Neice, Jessica

From: Bennett, Duke A
Sent: Saturday, May 13, 2023 5:20 PM
To: Gary Schomer
Cc: outside email; City Council; ContactCenter,311; Witt, Steve
Subject: RE: EXTERNAL -Wabash Fibre Plant North 19th Street

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CITY CLERK

Gary,

Thanks for contacting my office about this issue. Here are some key issues regarding this situation:

1. The property is still in control of the previous owner. They had sold the property but the buyer has defaulted with them and they are in a legal battle over that.
2. The owner has hired a firm to salvage the bricks, metal, etc. (Note: IDEM has approved this current activity.) That process has been going on for a couple of months and they are finally making some noticeable progress.
3. The City of Terre Haute could condemn the property but then it will likely end up in another legal situation. We could sue the owner to clean it up or do it ourselves. Estimates to clean up the site are well over \$1.1 million dollars.
4. The biggest issue is the asbestos mixed in the debris. That requires special handling and disposal. IDEM will have to approve any "next step" plan to finish the work. That is what is driving the cost estimate up for whoever finishes the job.
5. Our attorneys and IDEM have advised us to continue working with the owners to complete the work. If we clean it up using taxpayer dollars, we will then likely have to try to sue a company that has is no longer in business.
6. I am not committing city tax dollars until all other funding avenues are exhausted. Our attorney is in regular contact with the owner's attorney to get this completed.
7. What the county government is spending to tear down the building on the former IP Property (that they own) has nothing to do with the City of Terre Haute.

We do care greatly about this city. If this was an easy fix, it would already be done. Spending significant unbudgeted tax dollars to fix an expensive problem on private property requires exhausting all legal efforts first. That is where we are and we will continue to work hard to get it cleaned up.

I hope this information is helpful. Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Mayor Duke A Bennett



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From: Gary Schomer <gws196745@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, May 13, 2023 4:04 PM

To: outside email <Mayor@terrehaute.in.gov>; Witt, Steve <switt@terrehauteedc.com>; City Council <City-Council@TerreHaute.IN.Gov>; ContactCenter,311 <311.ContactCenter@TerreHaute.IN.Gov>

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****External Email. - Think Before You Click** --**
Help Desk

I was shocked to see that my old Wabash Fibre building remains partially destroyed with bricks still laying on the sidewalk and even in the street. The front of the building is still partially intact as it actually leans over the sidewalk. At least the area has been temporarily blocked for "safety". The fire that finally destroyed the building occurred a long time ago, but little to no attempt has been made to clear the property at least for safety.

Actually the whole industrial area previously including Wabash Fibre Box, General Housewares and Terre Haute Malleable looks like a war zone. It declares that Terre Haute doesn't care about its image, safety, encouraging investment. If a potential investor arrived in the city from the north end, they would probably turn around and leave as fast as they could.

I am extremely discouraged having worked for years to help make Terre Haute a better place to work and raise a family just to see that we still don't really care. How can we authorize funds to tear down the building on our old Weston property while we leave this dangerous mess on 19th street!

Gary Schomer

Help Someone Today

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Gary

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