

Vacant Brodart warehouse could be cleared for housing

March 31, 2010

By R.A. WALKER rwalker@sungazette.com

There could be an afterlife for the site of the vacant former Brodart warehouse at Oliver Street and Memorial Avenue.

According to a resolution on City Council's agenda Thursday night, the non-profit Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity organization is interested in acquiring the aging structure so it can be demolished and free up land on which to build 22 owner-occupied homes.

Mayor Gabriel J. Campana has endorsed the idea and, in a letter to local Habitat Executive Director Todd J. Fox, described the proposal as a "step in the right direction of removing blight from the city (and adding) more single-family homes."

Article Photos



RASHELLE CAREY/Sun-Gazette

The Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity organization is interested in acquiring the vacant former Brodart warehouse at Oliver Street and Memorial Avenue so it can be demolished and free up land on which to build 22 owner-occupied homes.

Council now has been asked to add its seal of approval with a resolution of support for the proposed "Brodart Commons Revitalization Project."

Habitat is not asking for city funds for the project. The resolution is described by John Grado, director of community and economic development, as simply a "commitment to work (with Habitat and its partners) on the project."

Documents provided to council by the administration include a letter to Fox from Richard L. Dill, Brodart's vice president and chief financial officer.

In the letter, Dill expressed "excitement about the possibilities of a future relationship with the Greater Lycoming Habitat for Humanity" organization.

Dill also wrote that Brodart wants to either sell the 1609 Memorial Ave. structure and neighboring parking area "for a nominal amount or donate" it outright, but he cautions that "environmental studies and the site's clearance for a future residential neighborhood" will have to be dealt with first.

Dill states in the letter that the Memorial Avenue site is "where it all began (for the company) over 60 years ago" and described the Habitat proposal - should it be possible - as "a favorable outcome for (the) aging building."

The block-long building has been under-used or vacant for many years, and Scott Street residents singled it out as a neighborhood concern at a recent City Hall meeting.

© Copyright 2013 Williamsport Sun-Gazette. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.