

Settlement Reached In Former Jeannette Glass Plant Acquisition

Zion Bullitt Avenue LP agrees to sign deed over to WCIDC

City of Jeannette, Pa., May 26, 2016 - The Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation's (WCIDC) Board of Directors, Gina Cerilli, Ted Kopas, and Charles W. Anderson announced today the approval of a settlement agreement with Zion Bullitt Avenue LP (Zion) concerning the former Jeannette Glass Plant property.

As part of the settlement agreement with the WCIDC, Zion will be permitted to remain on the property until September 1, 2016, to remove personal property, and Zion will consent to the conveyance of the deed by the Westmoreland County Tax Bureau to the WCIDC for the property. Ownership of the former glass factory has been tied up in courts since the WCIDC purchased the 13.2-acre property for \$305,000 at a 2012 tax sale. The most recent legal decision came March 1, 2016, when the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania denied Zion's latest request for an appeal, therefore upholding the tax sale.

"We are very pleased this agreement was reached, and the property will be in Westmoreland County's control," said Commissioner Gina Cerilli, who also serves as chairman of the WCIDC. "This marks another positive change for the City of Jeannette and the county looks forward to partnering with the community and bringing the site back to its full potential."

Zion owner Abraham Zion of New York City purchased the defunct factory in 1983 for \$4 million. Little was done in the following years to maintain the buildings on site and take care of hazardous waste left behind from years of glass manufacturing. This led to multiple citations by the state Department of Environmental Protection, including an Administrative Order issued in 2011 for the violations of the Solid Waste Management Act, the Clean Streams Law, the Storage Tanks Act, and the Air Pollution Control Act. Then in 2014, a Consent Order was issued by the state DEP for violations of the Solid Waste Management Act, the Clean Stream Laws, and the Air Pollution Control Act.

"The plant stood in ruins for far too long," said Commissioner Ted Kopas, who also serves as vice chairman of the WCIDC. "Now the county can take the proper steps to remediate the site and create an environment where a new generation can prosper."

According to WCIDC Executive Director Jason Rigone, before redevelopment can begin the blighted property will need to be accurately assessed for environmental and safety issues.

"Our intention is to enter the site immediately," said Rigone. "We'll ascertain the condition of the property and work in close cooperation with the DEP to devise a plan that remedies all environmental issues."

Commissioner Charles W. Anderson is glad progress is being made, and the site will no longer deter people from working and living in the area.

"With much of the housing on South 6th Street having been razed and rebuilt, it is fitting to have their view not of a bleak past, but an optimistic future," said Anderson.

About Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation:

Founded in 1983 by the Westmoreland County Board of Commissioners, WCIDC implements a comprehensive economic development strategy to promote growth in terms of job creation, economic output and a stable tax base for Westmoreland County. Through the development of a county-wide industrial park system, a responsive Business Calling Program and involvement in public/private partnerships, WCIDC strives to foster business growth, resulting in job opportunities for the citizens of Westmoreland County.

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