

## **WCIDC announces ownership of former Jeannette Glass plant**

*Westmoreland County Tax Bureau signs over the deed for 13.2-acre site*

**City of Jeannette, Pa.**, August 30, 2016 - The Westmoreland County Industrial Development Corporation (WCIDC) announced today the Westmoreland County Tax Bureau has signed over the deed to the WCIDC for the former Jeannette Glass property.

The conveyance of the deed was part of a settlement agreement the WCIDC reached with Zion Bullitt Avenue LP (Zion) in May. Along with the transferring of the property, Zion was permitted to remain on the site until September 1, 2016, to remove personal assets. 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.

"Now that Westmoreland County has control of the property, this marks a new chapter for the site and the beginning of new opportunities that can benefit the City of Jeannette," said Westmoreland County Commissioner Gina Cerilli, who also serves as chairman of the WCIDC.

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.

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.

"We will be working in close cooperation with the DEP to devise a plan that remedies all environmental issues," said Rigone. "It is our plan to begin this work in September."

The County's Redevelopment Authority completed a Phase I Environmental Study on the property through a grant from the EPA in May of this year.

"This was a big first step for the County to start the redevelopment process at the former glass factory in Jeannette," said April Kopas, Executive Director of the Redevelopment Authority of

the County of Westmoreland. “The Phase I assessment provides information on past uses of the site and determines if a Phase II study is needed.”

**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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***For more information please contact:***

**Westmoreland County Industrial  
Development Corporation**  
**Contact Person: Jason W. Rigone, Executive Director**  
Tel: 724-830-3061  
[www.westmorelandcountyidc.org](http://www.westmorelandcountyidc.org)