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Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority & Land Bank launching partnership to answer “What comes after the demolitions?”

April 11, 2023 (Greensburg, PA) – In July, Westmoreland County Commissioners announced that \$10.4 million of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds would be allocated to remediate blight in Westmoreland County through demolition of blighted properties, to allow for unprecedented blight remediation throughout the county.

But....what then? While the dangerous, unsightly, and costly issue of blight may be gone, some of our communities will have huge swaths of empty lots – and there is a limit to how many community gardens a neighborhood can sustain! To help answer this question, the Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority & Land Bank are partnering with Stromberg/Garrigan & Associates, consultants that have completed several successful projects in the region, to perform a comprehensive study to determine what types of reuse of these empty lots will best benefit the communities they are in.

Stromberg/Garrigan & Associates are projecting that the study will take approximately 3.5 months, and will include relevant public data collection, numerous community input meetings, case studies of similar communities, and more to reach their final recommendations for ARPA-qualified communities. The fixed fee for these services is \$20,000 – made possible through a generous grant provided by the Community Foundation of Westmoreland County.

The Westmoreland RA/LB is hopeful that this study will not only provide a road map for communities to begin revitalization efforts, but that it will also help communities receive much-needed funding to make the revitalization happen. Said Brian Lawrence, Executive Director of the RA/LB, “Both private and public funders want to see thoughtful and concrete recommendations for implementation. This planning effort will help our communities spring forward from the demolitions we’re carrying out. I hope it will open doors and minds about what’s possible on formerly blighted properties.”

The Westmoreland County Redevelopment Authority & Land Bank strive to work hand in hand with local officials and like-minded organizations to carry out blight demolition, residential and commercial rehabilitation, acquisition and repurposing of vacant and tax-delinquent properties, accessible and affordable housing, training and education partnerships, historic preservation, and brownfield redevelopment, all to make the communities of Westmoreland County more desirable places in which to live, work, raise a family and prosper.

Learn more at our Second Annual Blight Remediation Summit: tinyurl.com/BlightSummit23.

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