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Cc:	Olinger, Mark A. - PDR; Ebinger, Matthew J. - PDR; Jones, Carey L. - PDR
Subject:	1201 Porter Street - Item #8 3/2/20 Planning Commission Agenda
Date:	Friday, February 28, 2020 3:49:23 PM
Attachments:	image001.png

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Members of the City of Richmond Planning Commission –

Historic Richmond is writing to support the finding of blight for 1201 Porter Street and to recommend to the Richmond City Council the acquisition of the property to eliminate blight (Item #8 on Monday's Planning Commission Agenda).

The Ingram House, located at 1201 Porter Street is an ideal candidate for the City's Spot Blight Program:

- **It is the earliest Italianate style dwelling remaining in the Manchester Historic District and has architectural, historical and cultural significance for the City and Manchester:** The house was built in 1876 by Dr. Sylvanus Ingram, a Civil War surgeon who established a medical practice in Manchester. His son, Dr. Lawrence Ingram graduated from MCV and became head of the Manchester Board of Health and founded the Manchester Almshouse.
- **The house is blighted.** The area surrounding the Ingram House has been brought back to life, but this individual building is blighted and limits the full potential of the adjacent properties. The house has been in the City's Derelict Buildings Program for years, but the City has not had success in obtaining owner compliance. Despite years of efforts, the owner has not made the necessary improvements to bring the building up to habitable condition.
- **This situation rises to the standard of when Spot Blight should be used:** Demolition of the building would be an unfortunate loss for the neighborhood. Spot Blight can be used as a tool to encourage the owner to finally make the necessary repairs. Since that has not yet occurred, despite the initiation of the Spot Blight process and years of efforts through the Derelict Buildings Program, this Spot Blight Program can be used to ultimately see the building transferred to a party who will rehabilitate it.
- **The community wants to see this building saved and rehabilitated.** We have received inquiries from multiple interested parties in recent years relating to this property and believe that there are preservation-minded parties interested in saving it.

We have been advocating for the use of the Spot Blight Program in connection with this property for years and are pleased to see the efforts of the Planning Department to save this structure finally moving forward. We are grateful to the Planning Department Staff for thinking creatively to develop solutions for blight and to encourage continued revitalization of our City's neighborhoods.

Please note that in paragraph 4(a) of the final resolution, we encourage the removal of the clause "either demolish the Property or, alternatively," as we have seen the City successfully stabilize structures for sale as an economically efficient alternative to demolition in situations such as this. We do not believe demolition is an appropriate solution for this property in this situation.

Please let me know if you have any questions about these comments. Please also know that while we believe the private market has great interest in seeing this building saved, we also stand ready to explore how we and the nonprofit community might be involved in developing and implementing solutions for this property.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Cyane

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