

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Machala McCoy
570-337-5964
machalamccoy@gmail.com

BLIGHTED PROPERTY BECOMES LUXURY APARTMENT BUILDING

WILLIAMSPORT—A building long on the City’s list of blighted properties is now home to three upscale rental units.

Once a single-family house, the building, located at 659 E. Third St., was purchased by area real estate developer, Barry Eck, in December 2012.

The decision to convert the building into high-end rental space was easy for the developer. “The building demanded it,” said Eck. “It just had so much potential.”

The property is located in Williamsport’s up-and-coming East End neighborhood – an area that has been the focus of the City’s revitalization efforts.

“I’ve always said that the East End is going to be big one day,” said Eck, who owns numerous properties in the East End. “It’s a prime area for development,” Eck said, citing the area’s close proximity to both downtown Williamsport and Loyalsock Township’s bustling commercial sector.

The renovation of the property was an ambitious undertaking, which began by replacing the building’s badly deteriorating roof. Along the way, the developer suffered multiple break-ins and fought an unyielding pigeon population.

Zoned for commercial use, the City required the first-floor unit to be occupied by a business; however, Eck was concerned that the property’s limited parking space would be unable to meet the needs of an active business. To remedy this, Eck designed the unit to accommodate small business owners who work from home and see clients by appointment only. The unit is a customized dual-purpose space – a fashionable apartment that meets all commercial space requirements, including Americans with Disabilities Act regulations.

The building was designed to fill a void in Williamsport’s upscale rental market. The units offer a high-end alternative to the many industrial style loft apartments that were built during the last decade to target the influx of young men working in the gas industry.

-more-

The second-floor apartment was designed to convey the warmth of a posh country home. The design marries nature-inspired materials with an elegant color scheme. The two-bedroom apartment includes a gas fireplace, kitchen island with seating, a custom made walk-in closet, and high-end finishes throughout.

Eck transformed the building's attic into a third-floor loft. The one-bedroom apartment offers a modern rustic aesthetic, mixing wood flooring and mountain stone accents with sharp, clean lines.

The dramatic angles of the vaulted ceiling, while visually stunning, created space limitations that challenged the developer to devise creative ways to maximize every space. In the kitchen, Eck built cupboards into the eaves, creating storage in an otherwise unusable space. In the bathroom, the developer tucked a front-loading washer and dryer under the slope of the ceiling.

The building's renovation included the addition of a massive three-story deck, providing outdoor space to every unit. Eck made a special effort to ensure that the building was extremely well insulated and energy efficient, and in keeping with the building's history he installed a new finial on the roof to restore that piece of the building's original charm.

The building has generated a lot of excitement with area renters. "We've had a particularly strong interest from young adults working in the information technology and energy fields," said Eck. "They all say they haven't seen anything else like it."

Eck's next project will be the development of the area two doors down at the corner of Railway and East Third Street. The developer plans to combine the two existing blighted properties into one building featuring six mid-range one-bedroom and two-bedroom apartments.

Eck, a contractor and property developer with over 40 years of experience, is the owner of Barry Eck Contracting, Barry Eck Real Estate and Banajo Property Management. Eck owns numerous rental properties in Williamsport and develops properties for rent and for sale. To learn more, visit www.barryeckrealestate.com.

END

###

