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COUNTY of LUZERNE  
P E N N S Y L V A N I A  
ESTABLISHED 1786

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December 22, 2011

**To all interested parties regarding the proposed Demolition of the Hotel Sterling:**

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation 36 CFR 800, Section 106, the County of Luzerne has reviewed all comments and concerns received by the public regarding the proposed demolition of the Hotel Sterling.

The City of Wilkes-Barre's Assistant Director of Operations, Michael Simonson, sent a Condemnation Notice dated September 20, 2011, to the property owner, City Vest, stating that the structure (Hotel Sterling) has been declared unsafe and a danger to public welfare by the Wilkes-Barre City Code Enforcement Office. Three professional engineering reports were attached to the Condemnation Notice.

The first report, dated August 16, 2011, was from Leonard Engineering, Inc., stating that roofing materials have failed in a majority of areas and numerous areas continue to weaken. The report also states that extensive moisture over the years has caused visible deterioration of the terra-cotta floor tiles and steel framing recommending immediate rehabilitation or demolition.

The second report, dated September 15, 2011, again by Leonard Engineering, Inc., states the heavy flow of water from Tropical Storm Lee below the structure has impacted the stability of the underlying soils and their capacity to support the seven story building. In addition to the tropical storm, excessive amounts of water from the hurricane also entered the building through the partially collapsed roof weakening roof framing and leaving numerous deteriorated areas saturated. It is the opinion of the engineer that the structure poses a serious danger to the general public and demolition is recommended.

The third report, dated September 15, 2011, generated by George M. Albert, P.E., LLC, stated that the Hotel Sterling had water flow into the basement for over sixteen (16) hours and the static water level never rose to depth greater than six (6) feet. The engineer also noted that numerous flood slab openings and failures throughout the building took on major amounts of water. The roof structure at point was temporarily shored with 4x4 lumber beams. Multiple failures were noted in the temporary shoring as well as the original roof structure. It is also the recommendation of Mr. Albert that the property should be given thirty (30) days to commence razing of the structure.

In conclusion, the County of Luzerne has taken all of the comments from the public into consideration. However, the above documentation from the engineering reports indicate that it is eminent that the Hotel Sterling is not structurally sound and is declared unsafe and a danger to the public welfare.

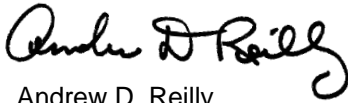
Prior to the project commencing, the Luzerne County Historical Society is requesting that the following be removed and relocated prior to demolition:

1. Limestone Marquee stone of the main entrance along W. Market Street, that reads "STERLING" with its attached balustrade and pink granite columns be saved.
2. The sign "Sterling Hotel" that is above the side door along N. River Street, along with the red canvas of the hanging marquee at the main entrance on W. Market. Also, if salvageable, the hanging marquee along W. Market Street.
3. A section of the copper roof cornice with one of the decorative wreaths.
4. If possible, some of the original tile work from the lobby and some sections of the wrought iron railings that surround the lobby along the second floor.

We are working with the engineers so that the above can be obtained.

Thank you for your letters of comments and concerns regarding this project.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew D. Reilly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "A".

Andrew D. Reilly