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Drug House to be Cleared Out and Cleaned Up *City Attorney's Office brings relief to Logan Heights neighborhood*

A property that has long attracted transients and drug users will soon be vacated and rehabilitated, San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott announced today.

The duplex at 3006-3008 Greely Ave. in Logan Heights has been the site of repeated violence, drug overdoses, and criminal activity for more almost two years. Since February 2021, San Diego Police have responded to at least 40 calls for service there, spending more than 150 hours dealing with emergency calls and illegal activities.

The property is supposed to be vacant, but has been overtaken by squatters, who often steal electricity from the neighbors. There are frequent reports of fights and screaming, and – in separate incidents – a woman died of a drug overdose in the home, a man was stabbed repeatedly, and a dog in distress was rescued by the San Diego Humane Society. At least two stolen vehicles have also been towed from the property.

“This property has been a menace to the community for too long,” San Diego City Attorney Mara W. Elliott said. **“When irresponsible property owners imperil the health and safety of our residents, or the integrity of our neighborhoods, my office will seek court intervention to force compliance with the law, as we did here.”**

Last year a fire was started inside one of the bedrooms. Due to an excessive accumulation of junk and debris, and lack of smoke detectors, the San Diego Fire Marshal maintains that the property continues to pose a significant fire hazard, endangering the occupants and neighbors.

After multiple inspections by City officials, the San Diego City Attorney's Office filed a civil enforcement action with San Diego Superior Court on November 2, 2022, citing multiple violations of the California Health & Safety Code, Civil Code, and the San Diego Municipal Code. The City Attorney's Office also petitioned the court to have a Health and Safety receiver appointed, which the court granted Tuesday.

The receiver will be responsible for taking control of the property, cleaning it out, and bringing it up to code. Currently, the structures have multiple broken windows, no heaters, an inoperable shower, and exposed electrical wiring, among other hazards.

The individuals named in the civil prosecution include Janet McFarlin of La Mesa, who is the administrator of the estate of her father, James McFarlin, the original property owner until his death in 2016. Also named is Norma Ortiz, who told City investigators and inspectors on several occasions that she is renting the property – though the administrator claims she is a squatter.

The Court also granted the City Attorney's request for a temporary restraining order prohibiting the defendants from using or maintaining a substandard property that is a public nuisance and a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the public and its occupants.

This case was brought on behalf of the People of the State of California and the City of San Diego by Supervising Deputy City Attorney Paul F. Prather of the City Attorney's Nuisance Abatement Unit, under the supervision of Chief Deputy City Attorney Gabriela Brannan and Assistant City Attorney Paige E. Folkman. This unit works in partnership with the Code Enforcement Division of the City Development Services Department, the San Diego Police Department, the Fire Department, other local agencies, and the community to identify and aggressively address problem nuisance properties.

Community members may report code, health and safety, and environmental violations to the City's Code Enforcement Division at 619-236-5500 or the City Attorney's Nuisance Abatement Unit at 619-533-5500 or CityAttorney@saniego.gov.

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