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City of Columbus Shuts Down Two East Side Drug Houses

Properties were the scene of dozens of police runs for domestic violence, sexual assault, narcotics complaints, drug overdoses, robbery, stolen vehicles, a stabbing, suicide attempt, and hostage situation

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein announced today that the City of Columbus secured emergency court orders to board-up two more drug houses, bringing the city's total to 15 shut down so far this year. Records indicate that the Columbus Division of Police responded to the two properties dozens of times for incidents involving narcotics trafficking, drug overdoses, sexual assaults, domestic violence, and a host of other complaints. Police also received information that one of the properties may have been involved in the sale of fentanyl, which is lethal even in small amounts.

In separate hearings earlier this afternoon, the Franklin County Environmental Court granted City Attorney Klein's motions for *ex parte* temporary restraining orders to immediately board up [2929 Hiawatha Street](#) in North Linden and [2265 Century Drive](#) in the Arlington Park neighborhood. The Columbus Division of Police and other city agents descended upon the properties in coordinated raids to enforce the court orders soon after they were issued.

“Given the most recent spike in fentanyl-related overdoses, we need to do everything we can to fight this alarming epidemic,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. “That includes education, interdiction, treatment, and a commitment to changing our approach within the criminal justice system in order to really address the root causes of crime and addiction. Couple that with the violence at these properties, we had no choice but to move quickly to shut them down.”

2929 Hiawatha Street

According to court documents, Columbus Police responded to this property at least 32 times in the last two years for complaints that included nine drug overdoses, four robberies, four domestic violence incidents, two sexual assaults, a stabbing, a suicide attempt, and a hostage report. Narcotics detectives also conducted five covert purchases of illicit drugs, including crack cocaine and heroin, from the premises since February of this year.

In July 2017, police received a report that two victims were sexually assaulted at the premises. In subsequent interviews, the victims told detectives they had been robbed, raped, and kidnapped.

In August 2017, police received a complaint that a resident of the premises was holding two

people hostage inside the house. First responders continued to be called to the premises for a variety of incidents throughout 2018. In January and February of this year, paramedics responded to drug overdoses. Detectives covertly purchased crack cocaine on February 25, March 4, and March 11, 2019.

On March 29, 2019 police responded to a report that an individual had been stabbed at the premises. Officers found blood but could not locate the victim. They did, however, discover a scale with crack cocaine on it, two “large bags” of crack cocaine, two bags of “unidentified narcotics,” and nine people hiding throughout the house.

Paramedics responded to another drug overdose on April 3, 2019. In May, police received a complaint that fentanyl was being sold from the premises. Detectives also obtained heroin from the premises on May 28, 2019.

2265 Century Drive

Over the past year and a half, Columbus Police have responded to the premises numerous times for narcotics complaints. This year alone, officers have confiscated semi-automatic weapons and drugs worth a total estimated street value of over \$83,000.

On March 27, 2018 narcotics detectives received information that at least three suspects were involved in drug trafficking at the premises—a drug supplier, a drug dealer, and an individual “who uses heroin and delivers drugs for the other two suspects.”

On February 28, 2019 detectives executed a search warrant at the premises and seized \$79,000 worth of cocaine, cash, a handgun, and a semi-automatic weapon. On June 11, 2019 detectives executed another search warrant, seizing more cocaine, \$2700 worth of heroin, single unit doses of an unidentified narcotic, cash, and a semi-automatic weapon.

“We greatly appreciate the court granting us the emergency board-up orders and hope shutting these properties down for the foreseeable future will provide relief to the neighbors who live nearby,” said Assistant City Attorney Sarah Pomeroy.

Hearings for preliminary and permanent injunctive relief against both properties are scheduled for Thursday, July 18, 2019 starting at 12:00 p.m.

If the properties are ultimately declared to be a statutorily defined public nuisance, state law grants the court authority to order the premises shut down for up to one year. The owners also would be permanently enjoined from “conducting, maintaining, using, occupying, or in any way permitting” a public nuisance anywhere else in Franklin County, Ohio.

In order to secure closure of the properties, Pomeroy, who is the Zone Initiative Attorney assigned to Police Zone Four on the east side of Columbus, is seeking to prove that the owners are guilty of maintaining a nuisance by establishing that they “knew of, participated in, or acquiesced to the activity which constituted the nuisance” as prescribed by [Chapter 3767](#) of the Ohio Revised Code.

Copies of the court orders for [2929 Hiawatha Street](#) and [2265 Century Drive](#) are available online.