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City Seeking Two-for-One Shutdown of Drug LandLord

*Citizen complaints prompted investigations into drug houses
located on opposite sides of town*

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr. announced today that the City of Columbus is seeking dual civil injunctions to board up two properties well-known for drug activity, one in the Linden area that has seen several heroin overdoses in the last 24 hours and the other on the city’s west side, both of which are owned by the same individual.

In response to the city’s complaints against Michael Fosnaugh for maintaining a public nuisance at the premises located at 967 Duxberry Avenue in Linden and 1036 Bellows Avenue off of Sullivant Avenue, the Franklin County Environmental Court ordered preliminary injunctive relief hearings to be held for both properties on Tuesday, October 11th.

The court also granted the city’s request for an emergency temporary restraining order for the Linden property, allowing the city to immediately evacuate and board up the premises this afternoon. On two separate occasions, search warrants turned up several dangerous weapons at the Duxberry site, which is located within a half-mile radius of Hamilton Elementary School, the Linmoor Education Center, and Linden McKinley High School.

“These cases are part of our ongoing effort to target drug havens—whether they are hotels, multi-unit apartment complexes, or single-family dwellings—that plague our neighborhoods,” said City Attorney Richard C. Pfeiffer, Jr.

The Columbus Police Division (CPD) initiated investigations in response to citizen complaints about illegal drug activity at both premises. After two covert purchases of crack-cocaine at the Duxberry location, narcotics detectives executed a search warrant and found 32.8 grams of crack-cocaine, 28.5 grams of marijuana, a revolver with live rounds, a semi-automatic rifle with live rounds, additional ammunition and magazines, a cocaine press, and five security cameras located outside the house. Three of five individuals found inside the premises at the time of the search warrant were wanted on various outstanding arrest warrants.

CPD provided Fosnaugh formal written notification of the illegal drug activity occurring at his premises and spoke with him directly as well. However, the drug dealing

continued. After another covert purchase of crack-cocaine at the Duxberry location, narcotics detectives executed another search warrant on September 21, 2016 and found 27.5 grams of heroin, digital scales, two semi-automatic rifles, a revolver with live rounds, a shotgun, ammunition, rounds, and magazines.

“While we have been building these cases over time, the current overdose epidemic shows how critical it is to do everything within our power, through both civil and criminal proceedings, to get drugs off our streets,” said Assistant City Attorney Katarina Karac, who filed the complaint on 967 Duxberry.

Assistant City Attorney Kristen Kroflich filed the complaint against Fosnaugh on his 1036 Bellows Avenue property, which had so much drug trafficking at the site that two individuals purportedly worked there as “doormen.”

An extensive police investigation into the property led to multiple covert purchases of crack-cocaine between July 2015 and June 2016. Three separate search warrants also provided further evidence of illegal drug activity. Columbus police sent Fosnaugh certified letters, which he accepted via signed receipts in April and June of this year, notifying him of the drug activity occurring at 1036 Bellows.

“We would prefer owners to work with the city to clean up their properties voluntarily, but when they don’t we are prepared to take action,” said Assistant City Attorney Kristen Dickerson.

If a property is 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.

In order to secure such closure of Fosnaugh’s properties, Karac and Dickerson, who are the Zone Initiative Attorneys assigned to the Linden area and west side of Columbus respectively, are seeking to prove Fosnaugh is guilty of maintaining a nuisance by establishing that he, as owner of the premises, “knew of, participated in, or acquiesced to the activity which constituted the nuisance” as prescribed by [Chapter 3767](#) of the Ohio Revised Code.

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