



ZACH KLEIN

COLUMBUS CITY ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, November 21, 2024
Contact: Pete Shipley, 614.965.0203
Email: pjshipley@columbus.gov

City Attorney Zach Klein Announces that City Reaches Agreement on Next Phase of Eastland Mall Redevelopment

Agreement sets aggressive schedule for demolition that minimizes impact on adjacent structures and allows for receiver to step in immediately if owners fail to live up to their end of the deal

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced the City and owners of the Eastland Mall reached an agreement for the demolition of Eastland Mall in a manner that limits the impact on adjacent structures, including two charter schools and the future site of a global market. If Eastland Mall owners fail to follow the timeline and requirements laid out in the agreement, the City can immediately motion the Court to appoint a receiver to take over the property.

“I am committed to a future where the Eastland Mall site is primed and ready to be redeveloped so it can be an economic center on the east side again, but that needs to be done responsibly. This agreement sets out an aggressive schedule to prep this site for the future while also making sure it’s done right and that care is given to adjacent structures,” said Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein. **“If owners fail to uphold their end of the agreement, the City will not hesitate to motion for a receiver to immediately come in and fulfill those obligations.”**

As part of the agreement, owners must present several contracts before November 30, including a contract for the remediation of asbestos at the site and detailed plans for the alteration or demolition of the primary mall structure, and by December 31, owners must submit to the City for review all permit applications for alteration or demolition.

The agreement also stipulates that owners must timely pay contractors in full out of a required \$350,000 deposit made to the Court.

The first phase of demolition must be completed and have inspections conducted by May 31, 2025. The second phase of demolition, which includes the parcel connected to the Eastland Preparatory Academy, cannot commence until the school’s summer break at the end of May and

must be completed by September 15, 2025. Any project delays that may result in deadline extensions must be agreed to by all parties.

If owners fail to meet any provision of the order, the City can file an order to appoint a receiver to take over the property, which the Court may immediately enter without any prior notice to current ownership. That order is not appealable. The agreement also allows the Court and City personnel to conduct compliance inspections at any time.

“The City will continue to monitor compliance with this order to ensure that any work being done on site is completed in a timely and appropriate manner, and that contractors on site are paid in full. We will not hesitate to motion for a receiver should owners fail to live up to their end of the deal,” said Property Action Team lead attorney Steve Dunbar.

In September 2022, the Court found owners to be in contempt of a June 2022 court order requiring the site to be secured and brought up to code. The Court fined owners \$3,500 and imposed an additional fine of \$250 for each day the property remained non-compliant. Owners were again held in contempt in June 2024 for violating the same order, this time being fined \$10,000 with an additional \$1,000 per day fine until the property is brought up to code. To date, owners have not paid any fines and have yet to bring the site into compliance.

A status conference is scheduled for Tuesday, February 11, 2025 at noon.