



ZACH KLEIN

COLUMBUS CITY ATTORNEY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, July 6, 2020

Contact: Faith Oltman, 614.965.0159

Email: fboltman@columbus.gov

City of Columbus Shuts Down West Side Drug House

Property was the scene of dozens of police runs, including for domestic violence, drug overdoses, gun violations and a fatality

COLUMBUS, OH—Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein announced today that the City of Columbus secured an emergency court order to board-up a west side residence that was the scene of at least 24 police runs in the last year, including nine domestic violence calls, three accidental drug overdoses, three gun incidents, two stolen vehicles, a stabbing, and a fatality. It is the 17th drug-related nuisance property the City Attorney’s office has taken legal action against this year, 12 of which have been located on the city’s west side.

Today’s hearing also comes on the heels of a Franklin County Coroner’s [report](#) showing overdose deaths were up 55 percent in the first quarter of 2020 compared to the same time period last year.

Immediately after the Franklin County Environmental Court granted City Attorney Klein’s motion for an *ex parte* temporary restraining order, the Columbus Division of Police boarded up the premises at [256 West Park Avenue](#).

“Amid the coronavirus pandemic, we’ve seen an alarming increase in overdose deaths, here in Franklin County and across the country. It’s important that we continue to fight the drug epidemic too,” said Klein. **“The Ohio Senate recently took a crucial step toward reforming our state’s drug sentencing laws. Now, it’s time for the House of Representatives to act so those of us who work in the criminal justice system can focus on helping people struggling with addiction while still aggressively going after drug traffickers and violent criminals.”**

According to court documents, the west-side residence came to the attention of Columbus police when they began responding to what became a string of domestic violence and gun incidents between July and October 2019. Officers responded to three more domestic violence calls on November 30 and December 4, 2019, and January 1, 2020.

On November 7, 2019, police and paramedics responded to the premises on report of an unresponsive individual. Attempts to resuscitate the victim were unsuccessful.

On January 19, 2020, officers responded to the premises on report of a stabbing, with the caller purportedly being stabbed in the stomach.

On March 22, 2020, an individual leaving the premises was found to be in possession of a handgun and 102 grams of methamphetamine. The individual also had multiple outstanding arrest warrants.

On April 22, 2020, a drug overdose victim was administered two doses of naloxone and transported to a local hospital for treatment. On May 7, 2020, police and paramedics once again responded to the premises due to a drug overdose.

On June 13, 2020, police recovered a stolen vehicle from the premises.

“Seventy percent of our drug-related nuisance cases this year have been located on the west side—and this property in particular is in one of the hot zones for opiate overdoses in the city,” said Assistant City Attorney Zach Gwin. “We greatly appreciate the court granting the emergency board-up order and want to thank the Columbus Division of Police patrol officers for their diligent work in helping us build this case.”

A hearing for preliminary and permanent injunctive relief against the property owners is scheduled for Thursday, July 16, 2020 at 11:00 a.m.

If the 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. 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 property, Gwin, who is the Zone Initiative Attorney assigned to Police Zone Three on the west 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.

**Editor’s note: A copy of the order is attached.*

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