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## City of Columbus Shuts Down Another Troubled Carryout

*Ironically named 'Family Market' was known as a 'safe haven for drug traffickers' and a place where illegal narcotics were 'regularly used, sold and maintained'*

**COLUMBUS, OH**—A notorious carryout that has plagued the King-Lincoln Bronzeville neighborhood for years has been shut down this morning after City Attorney Zach Klein secured an *ex parte* temporary restraining order against a business accused of operating “for the purpose of trafficking, possessing or abusing controlled substances and drugs” in the Franklin County Environmental Court today.

Longstanding problems at *Family Market*, located at [924 East Long Street](#) on the city's near-east side, included felony drug dealing, assault, burglary, fighting, public intoxication, car theft and the underage sales of alcohol, cigarettes and lottery tickets.

City inspectors also detected structural integrity issues with the building so severe that they were concerned the floor was going to collapse from the weight of the coolers.

**“The ironically named *Family Market* promoted anything but family values,” said City Attorney Zach Klein. “Cocaine was being sold right along with milk and eggs, and alcohol was being sold to minors. We are always concerned about what some might describe as ‘food deserts’ in certain pockets of our city but the danger this carryout posed to the surrounding neighborhood was clear and convincing.”**

According to court documents, after Columbus Police narcotics detectives obtained evidence of underage alcohol sales, the City of Columbus joint inspection taskforce known as the Nuisance Abatement Group (NAG) conducted a compliance check at the premises on May 4, 2017. The NAG inspectors found 42 grams of cocaine, two clear glass tubes, a digital scale and a box of plastic bags.

As a result of this inspection, the Ohio Department of Public Safety issued a violation notice to the permit holder of the establishment.

The police investigation continued gathering further evidence of repeated sales of cocaine as well as more instances of minors purchasing alcohol at the premises.

On December 26, 2017, police officials attempted to notify the business and liquor permit owner via certified mail about the illegal activity occurring at the property. The letter was delivered and accepted.

However, cocaine sales continued at the premises and another certified letter was sent to the

property owner's statutory agent on January 19, 2018. This letter also was delivered and accepted.

The official notices continued to be ignored and narcotics detectives gathered more direct evidence of crack-cocaine sales occurring at the premises.

**“Based upon the amount of evidence of illegal activity, we were concerned that keeping *Family Market* open would cause irreparable harm to the community,” said Assistant City Attorney Shayla Favor. “We are pleased with the court’s decision to grant the emergency board up order and look forward to pleading our case again at the next hearing.”**

A follow-up hearing for a preliminary and permanent injunction against the owner of *Family Market* is scheduled for 11:00 a.m. on March 19, 2018.

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 owner 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 business, Favor, who is the Zone Initiative Attorney assigned to the near-east side of Columbus, is seeking to prove that the owner 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.

Copies of the city’s [complaint](#) and the [court’s order](#) are available online.

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