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City Attorney Klein: Agreement Reached for Immediate Sale of Latitude Five25

City Attorney Klein says that in addition to the sale of the property, current ownership must make repairs to the property and pay for temporary housing for displaced residents

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein today announced that the City, the Legal Aid Society of Columbus, and representatives from Paxe Latitude, the owners of the Latitude Five25 Apartments, met through the day Tuesday to come to an agreement with current owners for the immediate sale of the property. The property's owners additionally agreed to make repairs to heat, hot water and elevators, as well as reimburse costs for temporary housing for displaced residents and allow tenants to vacate their leases without penalty. No tenants will be required to pay January rent.

“City and County officials stepped up to respond to this crisis, and now we have a clear path forward to remove an ownership group that for years has failed to meet basic standards of living for tenants,” said City Attorney Klein. **“This resolution will expedite the transfer of Latitude Five25 to a new ownership group, repay the City for its costs in responding to the gross negligence of landlords, and ensure tenants have options to move elsewhere without penalty. It’s a win for residents and a hopeful day for the future of these towers.”**

In late December, residents of the Latitude Five25 Apartments were evacuated as bursting water pipes led to flooding, loss of water and heat, and rendered fire suppression and three out of four elevators inoperable. Dozens of tenants were transported to a temporary emergency evacuation center at the Dodge Park Rec Center, and have since been offered temporary housing as officials continue to assess the damage to the towers.

As part of Tuesday's agreement, property owners will also be required to reimburse the City \$50,000 for overtime costs incurred in responding to the property on and after the initial evacuation on Dec. 25, 2022. Additionally, terms of the agreement require compliance with emergency orders issued by Code Enforcement and the Columbus Fire Department prior to any tenants re-occupying the buildings. Property owner must also continue written payment agreements with utility providers through closing of the sale of the property.

City Attorney Klein noted that any future property owner will still be subject to the City's nuisance case as long as it remains active, which requires any ownership or management group to keep the property in compliance with all applicable city and state codes, maintain security, and ensure safe, sanitary living conditions for tenants.

The signed order is attached.

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