



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Wednesday, February 10, 2016

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Blight Made Right: *A Community Nuisance Property Becomes Neighborhood Asset*

(Stockton, CA) - After years of code enforcement actions and thousands of hours of police response and resources, an apartment building at 219 E. Park Street has been transitioned from a substandard, crime-ridden property, to a safe, clean home for Stockton families and an asset to the community. The Stockton Police Department and its Neighborhood Services Section, together with the City Attorney's Office, took enforcement action against the problematic property, and, eventually, filed a lawsuit seeking the appointment of a property receiver under the California Health and Safety Code. The Court granted transfer of the property to a court appointed receiver, and, ultimately, a new owner who hired local property management firm PME. Today, the building has been repaired, issues with tenants addressed, and a long-time, responsible former resident now serves as resident manager.

Assistant City Attorney Susana Alcala Wood reflected on all that has transpired to address what was a chronic nuisance property. "This property has been the subject of multiple enforcement action over the years, and we had an out-of-town property owner that repeatedly ignored code enforcement efforts to work with her to address problems. The original property owner also failed to manage the property, which resulted in rampant drug

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activity taking place, spilling over into the neighborhood, and affecting all the surrounding properties and businesses. The remaining residents were living in deplorable conditions. She had no interest in providing quality housing for them, and they were suffering from the health and safety issues related to her neglect.”

The City addressed the problematic property using a two-step strategy that began with the Stockton Police Department engaging in extensive investigative work into the criminal activity at the property, which resulted in the arrests of several drug dealers, who, in the past, flagrantly engaged in illegal narcotic activity. Those cases were forwarded to the District Attorney’s Office for prosecution. The City Council then authorized the City Attorney’s Office to file suit. In September of 2014, the court granted the City’s request for appointment of a receiver. Over the period of about a year, receiver Mark Adams hired a new property management company that evaluated the needed repairs on the property, completed worked to get problem tenants out, hired a resident manager, and completed a full rehabilitation of the building from top to bottom.

“This is an example of us working together, with our Neighborhood Services Section, the City Attorney’s Office, and the community, to give a neighborhood some relief for crime and quality of life issues,” shared Stockton Police Chief Eric Jones.

Today, repairs have been made, building violations corrected, and the grounds are well-kept. The garbage, junk and debris that blighted the property for years is gone, and local property management company PME has filled the rehabilitated property with new residents. The tenants now work together with the manager to ensure that none of the prior

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conditions and activities return.

“The difference is like night and day,” continued Assistant Attorney Wood. “The building has been sold to a new owner, and these apartments are now homes. We were also successful in our application to the Court to have the City’s attorney’s fees paid, which means that these funds are now available to address other problematic nuisance properties in the City.”

Issues with nuisance properties should be reported to the Neighborhood Services Division at (209) 937-8813. Neighborhood Services will work directly with members of the Stockton Police Department to address criminal activity, or report illegal activity by calling the non-emergency number for the Stockton Police Department, (209) 937-8377.

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