

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25

TRANSCRIPTION OF
CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI
BUILDING STANDARDS BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 24, 2015

REGARDING THE PROPERTY AT 625 GORDON
MULTIFAMILY APARTMENT COMPLEX

1 SPEAKER: Okay. Staff has recommended that we
2 go ahead and address Gordon. They're prepared with the
3 slides for that one, so we will move to 625 Gordon.

4 SPEAKER: Okay. So at this time we'll hear
5 from the staff regarding the property at 625 Gordon
6 Street.

7 MS. PEZZI: Hi, Becky Pezzi, Code Enforcement.
8 This property was built in 1963. I had first responded
9 to the property on the 19th of May 2014 reference broken
10 windows, bed bugs, floors sagging, ceilings collapsing.
11 And when the tenants let me in, I confirmed all of those
12 things. And on the 20th of June 2014, I went and did my
13 reinspection and no issues were resolved.

14 On 7/18/2014, Norman Walters with Development
15 Services accompanied me over there with the Fire Marshal,
16 the health inspector, Jennifer Richter, and we did an
17 inspection for them, seeing as there was raw sewage,
18 exposed wires, and there was water leaking onto the water
19 heater with exposed wires while tenants were living
20 there.

21 On August 5th, I was advised there was new
22 owners as of the 4th, which would be the Corpus Note
23 Acquisitions, LLC. And so I started a new case on the
24 20th of August, when I was able to go with the manager at
25 the time.

1 SPEAKER: That was 2014?

2 SPEAKER: August -- yes, August 20th, 2014, and
3 observed the same things there. I kind of did a
4 walk-through with them, explaining what I had issues
5 with, so they could let the owner know. On -- while I
6 was there, I had high weeds, there was solid waste on the
7 property as well as the minimum standards.

8 On September 15th, 2014, there were vacancies.
9 They were starting to evict people, and people were
10 moving out, and they weren't securing the property. And
11 the management said she couldn't get, didn't have access
12 to the money, and she was waiting for approval, so I
13 boarded it up as an emergency board-up, with seven
14 openings.

15 On February 24th, 2015, I did a, started a
16 vacant building case, seeing as a lot of the apartments
17 were vacant, and also another case for the high weeds and
18 stuff on the property.

19 I'm going to go over a slide, the slide show in
20 a minute, because there was a few people that weren't
21 here the last time, just kind of recap on the pictures so
22 you could kind of see what I was talking about. It's not
23 as long as the last time.

24 They did, since the last meeting, since it was
25 tabled, put a fence around it. It was a very minimal

1 effort fence. There's no lock. People can just walk in,
2 and there was also holes in the fence, in the wooden
3 fence, so they can just come in any way.

4 They never, they hadn't reboarded what I had
5 asked them to board. And I had sent e-mails with the
6 manager kind of asking, and for example, on September
7 9th, I e-mailed the manager Ryan and letting him know
8 that I have openings that need to be resecured. The
9 boards were still there, just needed to re-screw them on
10 the frame.

11 I didn't get a reply till the 14th, and while
12 waiting for that, I went on the 11th with AEP. I got a
13 call from Officer Rodriguez saying that AEP was on the
14 property and they had issues there I needed to come, you
15 know, because of this case we were working on.

16 And I believe AEP is here, so they'll talk
17 about that when they're, what they found when they come
18 up. But when I got the reply on the 14th from the
19 manager, with the information saying that -- I replied to
20 him saying, "Well, what is the status? What is the plan?
21 Do you have an engineer, you know, evaluation and
22 report?"

23 He didn't reply till the 22nd, and he did say
24 the fence was finished, but it was around the 16th or
25 17th when I went that it just had been done. So, and

1 then that's -- again, I asked him if he needs me to go
2 show the contractor that they have, what openings I'm
3 talking about, because they would leave the boards on
4 there and, you know, come in.

5 But there was several -- well, first of all, it
6 was -- utilities were terminated on April 2015, just to
7 show when it's, how long it's been vacant. And again,
8 I'm going to recap the pictures and what the issues are
9 on the property.

10 On the interior, there were signs of mold
11 and mildew, due to water leaks, and possible plumbing
12 issues in and under the building. Damaged sheetrock, and
13 there was copper stolen from the walls, but they're just
14 missing pipes everywhere in the walls now because of
15 people that have broken in through the boards.

16 The A/C and water heaters were removed and
17 disconnected. There's heavy water damage. When people
18 were living there, it was like that. Walls were missing
19 and sheetrock damage. Some rotten wood inside due to the
20 water leak.

21 Broken window glass, and rotten frames on the
22 window and the door. Holes in the walls and ceilings
23 again. And right here you can see on the cabinet, it's
24 really warped because of some of the water. This is just
25 one of the apartments.

1 Some of the bathrooms and the sinks in the
2 kitchen were disconnected and taken, because they weren't
3 on the property. There was pipes dug out from underneath
4 there. There's exposed wires and cracked ceilings and
5 walls. The floors in some of the apartments were very
6 soft and felt like they were buckling when I would walk
7 on them, in multiple places in certain apartments.

8 Fire damage in two of the apartments. There
9 were three at the location, but only two were in the
10 apartment.

11 On the outside of the building, there was a,
12 found rotten corner boards, rotten wood and charred wood
13 from the fires. This is indicating foundation shifting
14 from the cracks in the veneer brick, or the brick on the
15 outside. And there were rotten eaves and rafter tails
16 due to the water damage.

17 On the steps, they were all in pretty bad
18 condition and all the eaves as well, but some of the
19 railings, the secured posts were not secured to the
20 building at all. That's by one of the fires in the
21 apartment. That one's in bad condition. And there
22 again, it's not attached, it's just sitting there, the
23 post.

24 Handrails were missing. Steps were missing.
25 And they, it felt like on certain areas of the balconies,

1 there was, it was very shaky and unstable, like it
2 wasn't -- I was questioning if it was going to support my
3 weight.

4 There was a lot of rust as well on the
5 handrails and on the balcony and loose support boards.
6 And some places like that, it was kind of separating from
7 the building.

8 I just went there recently, but this is from,
9 since the last hearing when we tabled it. They did have
10 a partial fence put in the front that kind of stopped in
11 the front. That was on the 3rd of September, this year.
12 And if you look, there is a little red, I guess it's a
13 PVC cut pipe, and that's a live, those are live wires,
14 according to AEP. But again, he's here, he'll explain
15 that to you.

16 This is on the 11th. These are all open.
17 That's why I'm taking pictures of these boards showing
18 that it's these ones in particular.

19 I'm showing these because I, I feel like it's a
20 lack of effort, like they say they were going to do a
21 lot, but -- and I would try to encourage them and work
22 with them, but it just wasn't, not much was getting done
23 it felt like. And in this picture, they had cut the wire
24 that was a live wire as well. Sorry. When we took the,
25 the power was cut, there was what was on there, and I

1 guess whoever possibly got shocked.

2 On the 16th, still the openings after I had
3 e-mailed him asking him to meet with his, his contractor
4 so I can show him the board-up. And these were the
5 fences, this is when it was complete. But the wires are
6 just holding them together, so it's very, again, minimal
7 effort on the fence. It feels like it's not very secure.
8 And we never saw anybody walking the property, like the
9 security or any other, anybody else to watch the
10 property.

11 I was forwarded this picture. It's not very
12 clear on this, but the gate is open, the one that it was
13 unsecured. That was obviously at night, and they, it was
14 wide open. So someone had been in there, because when I
15 went back the next morning, it was closed. And the
16 police were called out there to, you know, check the
17 property.

18 But, and this was the 22nd. We were here again
19 just checking on the property. And there were some
20 differences in the property, and we found someone inside
21 one of the properties, one of the apartments. And he was
22 arrested for criminal trespass, I believe.

23 There were still the same openings again, and
24 the wires holding together the fence. And the weeds have
25 started to grow. I put a City lock on the gate to try to

1 deter them, but I don't know, there's a hole on the fence
2 on the right side in the wood that they can just go
3 through.

4 We were trying to show how high the grass was.
5 It was pretty high. And I put in a work order to have it
6 mowed, since it hadn't been done. It was mowed and
7 boarded up by the City again.

8 And as of, sorry, we were advised that there
9 was a pending lawsuit due to back taxes totaling about
10 \$45,164.09. We, including the cleanup yesterday, the
11 City is, has a total of \$20,897 of what we've paid to
12 have it taken care of since we started, so --

13 SPEAKER: What's that number again?

14 SPEAKER: 20,897.

15 SPEAKER: That's separate from the 45,000
16 that's back taxes?

17 THE WITNESS: Yes. That's just back taxes,
18 yes. And so because of the issues we continue to have,
19 the City is recommending still demolition. But I believe
20 Isaac has the legal side of it he wants to add.

21 MR. RODRIGUEZ: Isaac Rodriguez, Police
22 Department. I just wanted to give you a recap, for those
23 that weren't here the last time, of the criminal history
24 of the location. In a two-year period, there have been
25 98 reports taken at this property, and 19 of those have

1 been felonies. They range from possession of controlled
2 substance, Penalty Group 1, which is the hard-core stuff,
3 like crack and heroin, stuff like that; possession of
4 controlled substance, Penalty Group 2A, which is
5 synthetic marijuana; prostitution; arson; aggravated
6 assault with a deadly weapon; and of course, copper
7 theft.

8 The two, I'm going to go into the two arsons.
9 They were, they both happened last year, and they both
10 happened in vacant apartments. The first one happened on
11 10/9/2014 in Apartment 17. There were three Hispanic
12 kids, I think from the high school right across the
13 street, that went into the room. They had lighter fluid.
14 They sprayed a teddy bear. Because actually myself and
15 Officer Pezzi were in that very room that morning taking
16 photos trying to tell the owners that they needed to
17 board it up, and later that day, the kids set it on fire.
18 The arson investigator said that it was, of course,
19 arson. We tried looking for the kids. We couldn't find
20 them.

21 The next fire happened on 12/17 of 2014. By
22 that time, all the apartments were abandoned. They were
23 all evicted. And that was Apartment 21, and there were
24 no suspects. There was nobody around to see who set the
25 house on fire, but again -- or the apartment on fire, but

1 again, that was arson.

2 The copper theft started around January 30th,
3 2015. I notified the management company, which is the
4 same management company that's still in charge of it,
5 just a different name. I just wanted to make that clear.
6 Back then it was called Fairway. I believe now it's
7 McLemore. Yeah, McLemore. And they didn't do anything
8 about it. So the copper theft continued, continued,
9 continued, and now they are where they're at now with all
10 the copper missing.

11 Also, I want to go into the extra effort that
12 the Police and the Fire Department have been doing. Like
13 I stated last time, the Police Department has been going
14 back and doing continuous checks to make sure that this
15 property is safe; however, we cannot be there 24/7, and
16 stuff still happens.

17 The Fire Department also has taken it upon
18 themselves to go by, because there have been so many
19 fires here, like Officer Pezzi said, two actually, the
20 two that I talked about in the apartments, and then the
21 one outside. They set a mattress on fire.

22 And we've all been increasing our frequent
23 patrol, and the last time, I don't know, the manager, he
24 said that he was going to do his part. I talked to him
25 in the back. I said, "We'll do our part, we'll keep, you

1 know, keep an eye on it, but we need you to do your part
2 and put up a fence." Well, as per the board's request,
3 I've been keeping up with the property, and I've been
4 going back weekly.

5 On the 3rd of September, myself and -- my
6 partner and myself went by the location. Nothing had
7 been done. It was the same. On the 11th, that's
8 whenever I got the call from AEP saying that they got,
9 they had several meters missing, which was very, very
10 weird, and he'll go more into it. They don't just go
11 missing, so, as far as getting signal back to the main
12 office.

13 So when we got there, we noticed that more
14 copper had been stolen. Still nothing had been done.
15 The fence hadn't been put up. However we did talk to a
16 guy that was there to mark where underneath the ground,
17 you know, there was pipes and stuff like that. So they
18 were starting the process, but still nothing had been
19 done to, no board-ups or anything like that.

20 On September 17th of this year, we went back
21 again. They had finally put the fence up, but -- or
22 actually, we went back September 16th. They had finally
23 put the fence up, but it was not secured. It didn't have
24 a lock. The only thing that was holding it was a little
25 piece of string that wasn't even tied or anything like

1 that.

2 And that night, that's whenever I got the call
3 from Officer Pezzi saying that the gate was open. So I
4 sent some units by there. They checked the property.
5 They didn't find anybody at that time, but they did tell
6 me that there was obvious signs that somebody was staying
7 there and that it needed to be secured. So that's
8 whenever we started to put, we thought it would be a good
9 idea to put our own lock on it.

10 And then, of course, on the 22nd of this month,
11 which is on a Tuesday, that's whenever Officer Orozco and
12 Officer Mahunkle arrested that individual for
13 trespassing, for criminal trespass. He said he had been
14 living there for three weeks, and you know, it was just
15 open, it's open to the public.

16 But the main, the main thing that I want to say
17 about this property is that it is a, a safety hazard.
18 Not only is it open to the public so anybody can go in
19 there, and the walls are about to come falling down. I
20 know that there are just veneers, but bricks are still
21 heavy. And the railings are falling off. The railings
22 do not support anything. If a kid goes up there, leans
23 on the railing, they're going to fall over.

24 Thank God to AEP that they finally shut the
25 power off, because there were exposed wires all over the

1 place. And again, he'll go into that.

2 So it's just one huge big safety hazard that we
3 are having to take care of that they are not doing a
4 thing about, and we would like for your permission to
5 demolish it. Thank you.

6 SPEAKER: All right. I believe we have some
7 other individuals from other city departments and other
8 agencies that are here to speak about the property.
9 Rebecca, do you know who we want to bring up first?

10 MS. PEZZI: Yes. Jennifer Richter is here from
11 the Health Department, and she also had given you some
12 papers on her report.

13 SPEAKER: If you could turn on the podium,
14 please.

15 MS. RICHTER: Hello? Okay. Hi, I'm Jennifer
16 Richter. I'm with the Health Department. We were sent
17 out there on numerous occasions. We would deal with the
18 pool violations and when it came to raw sewage. So I've
19 been on this property since March of 2014 countless
20 times, both for complaints with raw sewage on the
21 property, which meant lines were broken, or we'd get
22 calls from tenants who were living there, they would have
23 raw sewage back up in their sinks and the bathroom and
24 the kitchen. Or let's say the neighbor above them was
25 having problems, they would have overflow in their

1 downstairs apartment.

2 So for me, what I can talk about is the pipes
3 and the plumbing there is really bad. Of course, we've
4 had the water off for many months and no tenants, so I
5 haven't been out there lately, but I can just tell you
6 it's going to be very costly for them to do major repairs
7 when it comes to the plumbing.

8 But we were out there on countless times for
9 ongoing issues. And it took them a long time to finally
10 fix it. I can say some of the property, the lines were
11 fixed on the outside of the property, but they never
12 really did plumbing repairs on the inside of any of the
13 units.

14 And the pictures they gave you were pictures
15 from both inside and outside the apartments when we had
16 overflows. Any questions?

17 SPEAKER: Are the house issues restricted to
18 the property premises, or do they have any effect on
19 surrounding areas and neighbors?

20 SPEAKER: When we have raw sewage on the
21 property? Then it became, I would think, a community
22 issue, because you had kids walking through there, you
23 know, pets walking through there. So it's anybody that's
24 living in the area.

25 MR. RODRIGUEZ: If I can add to that -- I'm

1 sorry, Isaac Rodriguez, Police Department. We actually
2 had to shut down the water at one point because of sewage
3 coming out into the roadway and going to the curbs and
4 draining onto the gutter.

5 SPEAKER: So it does affect the community as
6 well?

7 MS. RICHTER: Oh, yes. It goes into our storm
8 water.

9 SPEAKER: Other questions?

10 MS. RICHTER: Thank you.

11 MS. PEZZI: And next is Tom Grant from AEP.

12 MR. GRANT: Good afternoon. My name is Tom
13 Grant. I'm with AEP. I'm a meter servicer. I respond
14 to outages on the new smart meters. When the signal goes
15 lost in the command center, we do not have meter readers,
16 so we don't know what's going on with the meter, if it's
17 gone dead, if something's, a line's fallen down and
18 nobody has power, so we respond to those.

19 On the 11th I responded to four outages on one
20 building. And what it was was in the pictures, what they
21 had done, and it's going to be this one right here, they
22 had gone in and cut all the main wires coming in -- these
23 are hot, so if somebody grabs onto them, they're going to
24 get electrocuted -- and stolen all of the other wires
25 going to the meter.

1 Now that's what we found on that one building.
2 As we went through the property, we found multiple issues
3 where wires were missing. The office was still an active
4 account, and we had to shut it off due to a safety issue.

5 And that was the meter can for the office.
6 There are supposed to be wires going to it. On this
7 bottom left right here is the hot wires that were still
8 hot, coming into where, the meter box, to feed the power
9 to the office. It also fed the pool at the time.

10 And then from there, it goes to the top, where
11 the meter fits into it. Wires go up there, and then they
12 come back down, and then they go out at the bottom right
13 there to the breaker box. Everything's been stolen.

14 There was two other active accounts there, and
15 they were at the gates. Each wrought iron gate on the
16 Swantner side -- no, Swantner? Swantner side. This was
17 the, there was an electric motor that was there. Those
18 wires are live. It was stolen. So that's a safety
19 issue. If somebody walks by, steps on it, they could get
20 electrocuted. We shut that account down also for safety.
21 And it was the same way on the other side.

22 On one building, if you look at this picture
23 right here, this was a main breaker box. It was a huge
24 breaker box that they had hooked on to with a rope and
25 pulled it off of the wall. And the next picture down

1 where you see the wires that are laying on the ground,
2 the big ones, this one, that's where it was. Those wires
3 that are laying down there were hot. So this is another
4 one that we cut it off due to safety, to keep the general
5 public from getting electrocuted.

6 When we got to the center, as we went building
7 by building, this is the type of thing we found. These
8 wires were hot, and they had cut wires that they needed
9 or wanted and just left everything energized to where if
10 somebody grabbed onto it, they would be electrocuted.

11 SPEAKER: What was the date of that visit?

12 MR. GRANT: That was September 11th. The
13 meters had gone missing a few days before that, and so we
14 responded to it as we got to it. And that's what we
15 found. I had called Sergeant Rodriguez to explain to him
16 that I needed to go out there because of this issue.

17 Sorry, a few of them are out of order from what
18 I was doing. The main one that I was responding to was
19 these four, and that's the, that one picture I showed you
20 that the three wires were hot, they were cut off. This
21 is the electrical trough right here. As you can see, all
22 of those same size wires are gone. And so this killed
23 all four of these meters. And that's what the initial
24 response was for, at the two main buildings off of
25 Swantner.

1 This was still hot when we found this. They
2 were trying to steal this wire. And that's these. I
3 don't know if they got shocked or not, but this was still
4 welded in place to the breaker box. And once we cut the
5 service at the pole, then we removed them safely. Any
6 questions?

7 SPEAKER: Is there any kind of hospital visits
8 associated with that time frame that y'all noted? Okay.

9 MR. RODRIGUEZ: None that were reported, sir.
10 I'm sorry.

11 MR. GRANT: Everything that was cut off, it was
12 due to safety. But there was such an issue of people
13 stealing the copper, we had no choice but to make it safe
14 for the public. Because at the time we were out there,
15 there was no fence, and we didn't know that they were
16 going to put up a fence. That's upon what the City was
17 doing.

18 We know we have to make it safe for the general
19 public, because I know people could still go through
20 there. So that's why we cut the electricity to the whole
21 complex.

22 SPEAKER: Would you say that's an unusual or
23 extreme circumstance, or is this something that kind of
24 happens?

25 MR. GRANT: I've worked for the company for 18

1 years, and I've never cut off a whole complex. This is
2 the first time in 18 years that I've ever seen it this
3 bad.

4 SPEAKER: Okay. And was there a response from
5 management when it -- were they notified about the AEP
6 situation, and did you get a response?

7 MS. PEZZI: I e-mailed, but he didn't mention
8 anything about it, I mean, on replying about AEP being
9 out there.

10 MR. GRANT: And we've had no response from them
11 why we cut it off. And like I said, there was three
12 active accounts, and they were, all belonged to the
13 owners or management company, but they were cut off due
14 to safety.

15 SPEAKER: Thank you.

16 MR. GRANT: Thank you.

17 MS. PEZZI: And now I have Norm Walters from
18 Development Services that was out there with us on a few
19 occasions.

20 MR. WALTERS: My name is Norm Walters. I'm
21 with Development Services. First time I went out there
22 was in March of '14, we got a call to assist Code
23 Enforcement for possible building violations or safety
24 issues with electrical on the site.

25 When we got there, we did find several air

1 handling units, which is the heaters inside the building,
2 with wires that were not properly secured to, or
3 installed to the units.

4 We found condensers that were actually leaking
5 water out onto the floors in the apartments, and actually
6 weakening the floors. We had a couple of apartments we
7 walked through that actually, if we put two or three
8 people there, it was a good possibility we could have
9 gone through the floor. It was that soft. It was like
10 trying to walk on real thick, heavy carpet.

11 We found one apartment we went into, as we were
12 heading that direction, we found a gentleman coming out
13 with a bucket, and he was pouring it all out on the lawn,
14 and it was human waste, which was coming out of one of
15 the waste lines because the line was plugged, so he had a
16 clean-out in there.

17 And what they were doing is they left the plug
18 out of it, and they left this bucket sitting there, and
19 when the bucket got filled, they were throwing it out
20 onto the property. And at that time there was an officer
21 with us, and I believe he cited them for that. And they
22 got with management to get them moved to another
23 apartment or get it fixed right away.

24 We also found a couple of apartments on the
25 second floor, I think it was Building 2, you went into

1 the bathroom, and you could watch the person in the
2 bathroom in the other apartment next to them. There was
3 no walls there. It was just the studs. Everything was
4 missing.

5 And several of the apartments had no ceilings
6 left at all in the second floor in the restrooms, and
7 there was one that looks like someone made an entry
8 through a roof and went from unit to unit to rob copper
9 out of some of the units as they came dropping down
10 through the ceilings.

11 We also found that the services, we had asked
12 them to secure those because the panels that they were
13 using to cover all the stuff was falling apart. And some
14 of those panels were open, like somebody was looking at
15 them to try to want to steal something or whatever. And
16 we closed those up, you know, when we were there to
17 secure them to keep people's hands out of them. Told
18 them they needed to get something, you know, bring an
19 electrician in and just secure these things.

20 And we had another unit that was in the back --
21 was that Building 2, the one with the parking lot in the
22 back of it? Yeah, the one facing the high school. Oh,
23 yeah, one of the services was totally falling off the
24 building.

25 And we actually asked, we had placed an order

1 with AEP to shut the power off on that one until they
2 could straighten that out. And then we found out later
3 after we shut it off that there was still a couple of
4 tenants living in there. So after they got it fixed, we
5 okayed them to turn those two units back on until they
6 went through the process to get them out of there.

7 But that had, overhead laterals were hanging
8 way too low, and everything was at least, a couple of
9 pieces were almost a foot away from the walls. And it
10 was just pulling them away from the wall, and they were
11 all ripped out. There was nothing supporting it except
12 the wires themselves. So they had to fix that.

13 And we found many a service panel that had
14 open, openings in there where the breakers would go that
15 were not properly capped where children could stick their
16 fingers inside and actually touch the hot bus bars in the
17 panel. And there was children running all over the
18 place. And it seemed like the tenants didn't really care
19 if the kids put their fingers in there, because matter of
20 fact, we stopped one that was getting ready to stick a
21 pencil in it when we went into the apartments.

22 And there was, I mean, there was like waste
23 coming up in the sinks in a couple of the kitchens. They
24 couldn't use them. There was actually raw sewage sitting
25 inside some of the sinks because they were backing up.

1 And that was on a second floor apartment, and that was
2 backing up in there.

3 And so we advised them that they needed to get
4 plumbers in there and take care of the plumbing issues,
5 and we need to get electricians in there, and they need
6 to get some permits to get this stuff fixed.

7 And we went back with them again later after
8 they started evacuating people, and we found the decks
9 were falling away from the building. We had one deck
10 there must have been almost four inches from the
11 building, and you could see the bolts that have already
12 been pulled out of the wall.

13 And there was the one that had the fire. No
14 one did anything to actually prevent anybody from going
15 up on those decks, and there was no support on those
16 decks whatsoever from the second floor unit. Everything
17 was burned out from below it. So we advised them to
18 cover that or board that up so that no one could get up
19 on that deck.

20 And at that time there was still children
21 running around, but it wasn't from tenants. It was just
22 from the neighborhood. There was like nothing to stop
23 them from getting in there. And we just, we actually
24 advised them that it would be a good idea to just shut
25 everything down, because the electrical was in bad shape,

1 and most of the units were really going to require some
2 major rewiring.

3 We walked through there and we found two-inch
4 copper lines missing from the drain lines and stuff.
5 They were removed. Most of the copper in all the
6 apartments were gone.

7 Most of the hot water tanks were not properly
8 installed. They all had electrical safety issues to
9 them, because they all had exposed wiring, all the ones
10 we saw, and they were just sitting in closets. They
11 weren't properly secured or ventilated for any of the
12 heat. So we have actually advised them that they needed
13 to get these, these units rewired or redone.

14 And I think the second time we went around, the
15 owners were with us, and they were, "Oh, we're going to
16 go and remodel, we're going to do all this," you know.
17 So we gave a complete list of what was going to be needed
18 to Code Enforcement, which they should have been in your
19 packet with them.

20 And that's pretty much it. I mean, my
21 recommendation is that it needs to come down. Questions?

22 SPEAKER: Thank you, sir.

23 MS. PEZZI: I would just like to add something
24 really quick. Becky Pezzi, Code Enforcement. On the
25 last e-mail I got from Ryan, who's the property manager,

1 he had attached the engineer's report, and I put one all
2 on your desk.

3 He also said in his e-mail that they would need
4 about three months to get the plans together for what
5 they want to do and their construction crew or whatever.
6 But he said he wasn't going to be able to make it today.

7 SPEAKER: At our last meeting, talking with the
8 project manager and talking with the apartment or the
9 property manager, I believe they agreed to have the fence
10 in place, totally and secured, and they also mentioned a
11 security officer. Have y'all seen --

12 THE WITNESS: No.

13 SPEAKER: -- or witnessed any security?

14 MR. RODRIGUEZ: No, sir. We've gone through
15 there several times a day. I have done it personally
16 just to keep an eye to see if, what they're doing. I
17 have not seen one.

18 So, and also I wanted to add, on this report,
19 the engineer's report says that fire damage, or possible
20 water damage to adjacent units from firefighters'
21 efforts. That water damage is from the leak that we had
22 to stop because they had a water heater leaking in the
23 adjacent units.

24 So it wasn't because of the firefighters. It
25 was because of their lack of effort. We found the water

1 was coming from above Apartment 17. It was leaking all
2 over the place, so we had to tell the Water Department to
3 shut it down. Thank you.

4 SPEAKER: Has there been any improvement as far
5 as the number of offenses that you've been responding to,
6 or the Health Department has, is, are those issues still
7 continuing?

8 MR. RODRIGUEZ: As far as the drug-related
9 arrests and all the criminal stuff, as far as the
10 possession of controlled substance, that has gone down
11 because there, nobody's living there. And actually the
12 only time that we ever find anything is whenever we go,
13 whenever the Police Department goes, because there's
14 nobody there to call, and there's, they have free reign.

15 And the last time that we came here, they had
16 arrested somebody for stealing copper, and that's because
17 the officer was doing proactive and he was doing a
18 frequent patrol of the area, and like a, on yesterday
19 with the, or the day before yesterday, the person that
20 was arrested was arrested because we did proactive, we
21 went by the place.

22 So the number of arrests have gone down,
23 because there's nobody there to call. But every time
24 that we go there, we do find stuff.

25 And actually today, before the meeting, we did

1 go by and we found evidence of drug use because we found
2 a marijuana pipe in the area. So I'm thinking the kids
3 are coming from across the street, and they're hanging
4 out in the area.

5 SPEAKER: And Mr. Chairman, we also have
6 Captain David Blackmon, who's the director of our Code
7 Enforcement Division. He would like to say a few words.

8 MR. BLACKMON: Good afternoon, Board.
9 Actually, David Blackmon, Captain, CCPD. You know,
10 really what I want to say is I think we have building
11 standards cases that we bring before this board that need
12 to come down because frankly they're delapidated and
13 they're blighted and they're a mark on the City of Corpus
14 Christi.

15 And then we have these, these type of issues
16 where not only are they blighted, but they're a safety
17 hazard for the residents, not only that live around this
18 thing, but a school that is less than 100 yards from
19 this, where the kids are obviously, by proof, are coming
20 into these.

21 So, you know, we as a City and Code Enforcement
22 have a duty to protect these kids, because we all know
23 that children are children, and they're going to, they're
24 going to be brave, and they're going to experiment, and
25 they're going to do what they think they can do.

1 So we've already seen the arsons, the stability
2 of this, this building. So we have both. We have, in
3 this particular case, we have a safety issue, and we have
4 a health issue. The health issue is not only the past
5 with the sewer that we have that has been allowed to soak
6 into the soil and into our storm drains, but we have
7 wires that have been allowed to exist even after advising
8 these property owners that people are stealing the
9 copper, and allowing these wires to stay hot.

10 The property owners have, for lack of a better
11 word, they have grossly failed to meet their needs of
12 this apartment complex.

13 And this isn't an isolated incident with this
14 company. Y'all may remember that last year we brought
15 another one of their buildings, which is on the Reid
16 Apartments, which were right next door to this one. And
17 we brought it before y'all, and y'all ordered demolition
18 because it was, frankly it was the same exact scenario.
19 They would go through and they'd say, "We need to get an
20 inspector," and nothing was done until we finally had to
21 bring it before this board and have it ordered to be
22 demolished.

23 And coincidentally, during that one Building
24 Standards Board meeting, we had told them, "Hey, this
25 property here is next unless you do something with it,

1 because it is in bad shape also."

2 And at that point, they said they were going to
3 start working on it. They were going to fence it. They
4 were going to board it up, and they were going to
5 rehabilitate it.

6 And from that point to this point today,
7 nothing has been done with this building. We, the City,
8 have been charged with maintaining this property and to
9 assure that the citizens of the city and the children are
10 safe.

11 The grass, we have to mow. Y'all have seen, we
12 have, what, 40,000 or 20,000 -- I'm sorry -- \$20,000 that
13 we've, in fees that we've encumbered because of their
14 lack of responsibility, these absentee landlords from
15 outside the state, who are, who are holding these
16 residents hostage because they frankly, they want to own
17 the property, but they don't want to do anything with it.

18 And I just think that we have a duty to protect
19 the residents. And I believe, like I said, not only is
20 it a health concern, and structurally the building
21 because of the damage that has been done to this thing
22 through fire, and the electrical, the stealing of the
23 copper, that frankly the cost to bring this building back
24 up to code would be such that it's not worth that.

25 And I think, you know, and then we're being

1 held hostage unduly, and I think we have a duty to bring
2 this building down. Any questions for me? Thank you.

3 SPEAKER: Anything further from the staff?

4 Okay. Then questions --

5 MS. PEZZI: No.

6 SPEAKER: -- from the board to the staff at
7 this time?

8 Okay. Then at this time I'll open the public
9 hearing regarding the property at 625 Gordon. Is there
10 anyone present who wants to speak in favor or against the
11 motion? Seeing no one, I'll close the public hearing.

12 At this time, I'll entertain any motions from
13 the board.

14 SPEAKER: Mr. Chairman, for the record, I do
15 need to go ahead and state the case. We didn't do that
16 ahead of time, so if you will bear with me.

17 The Case Number is 15-568. Owner of the
18 property is Corpus Note Acquisitions, LLC. The location
19 is 625 Gordon, multifamily apartment complex.

20 Staff's recommendation is demolition, because
21 it is 62 percent overall deteriorated. The board voted
22 at the last meeting to table this case at their last
23 public hearing held on August 20th, 2015.

24 The representatives of the owner, owner agreed
25 to secure the property with a completed fence, and the

1 property was inspected several times since then and was
2 found to be noncompliant, under the provisions of Section
3 13-22H1C of the Housing Code, and due to the substandard
4 and delapidated conditions of the structures, and the
5 hazard to the health, safety and welfare of the public is
6 henceforth declared; therefore, the owner be required to
7 demolish the structure within 30 days. If demolition is
8 not started and completed as required, then the City be
9 authorized to demolish.

10 SPEAKER: Okay. Motion from the board?

11 MR. TORN0: Okay. This is Shane Torno. For
12 the property at 625 Gordon, the multifamily apartments, I
13 move to accept the staff recommendations that the owner
14 be required to demolish the structure within 30 days. If
15 demolition is not started and completed as required, then
16 the City be authorized to demolish.

17 MR. HASSMAN: Lee Hassman, second. Lee
18 Hassman.

19 SPEAKER: Okay. Any discussion?

20 SPEAKER: I think it should be noted and
21 relayed to the property manager or owners or whoever was
22 supposed to show up and didn't show up, that the City did
23 try to give them many, many options and lots of time.
24 They came before the board. I think it was our
25 expectation that they would at least fulfill two

1 commitments, which was the security guard and the fence,
2 and that they've been a repeat offender.

3 And to the City's Staff case, y'all built a
4 very strong case in order for us to recommend demolishing
5 it. We really don't like to demolish properties that
6 have a high value and bring in good property taxes for
7 the City, but they just really were very noncompliant.

8 And you shouldn't have to be guarding a
9 property and not protecting the rest of the citizens on
10 your regular daily duties. All right, that's it.

11 MR. HASSMAN: I tend to agree with that
12 wholeheartedly. The thing that concerns me the most is
13 the effect that it's had on the community as well as the
14 property owners and the citizens. And we have to
15 remember that the community still stands first in this
16 City.

17 SPEAKER: Okay. If there's nothing further,
18 we'll take a roll call vote from left to right, please.

19 SPEAKER: Aye.

20 SPEAKER: Aye.

21 SPEAKER: Aye.

22 SPEAKER: Aye.

23 SPEAKER: Aye.

24 SPEAKER: Aye.

25 (End of recording.)

1 STATE OF TEXAS)

2 COUNTY OF NUECES)

3

4 I, MOLLY CARTER, Certified Shorthand Reporter
5 for the State of Texas, do hereby certify that the
6 foregoing 33 pages, numbered 1 through 33, constitute a
7 full, true and correct transcription, to the best of my
8 ability, of the proceedings had in the above-captioned
9 cause; thereafter, reduced to typewritten form by me and
10 under my supervision.

11 Certified to by me this 25th day of January
12 2016.

13

14

15

16

MOLLY CARTER, CSR, RPR, CRR
CSR NO. 2613, Expires 12-31-17

18

DepoTexas - Firm No. 644
615 N. Upper Broadway, Suite 1450
Corpus Christi, Texas 78401
Telephone: (361) 883-3400

19

20

21

22

23

24

25