

April 23, 2018

Mayor Ethan Berkowitz  
City Hall  
632 W 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 840  
Anchorage, AK 99501

Dear Mayor Berkowitz,

There comes a time when enough is enough.

We, a diverse group of neighbors in Airport Heights, have watched over the vacant buildings next to our homes for years. In a four-block area, there are four derelict structures that have been unoccupied for years, in one case, for over 20 years. The buildings are not safe places, don't have heat or electricity and have been ransacked by people taking advantage of absentee ownership. We have repeatedly chased away people breaking into those empty places to live.

We have tried to fix the problem. We have written the property owners. We have called the fire department when we noticed flames in the windows made by people who lit fires in the sink for heat. We have called the police when people kick in doors and are going in and out at all hours of the day and night. People have been arrested but more people follow. We have registered complaints with the code enforcement department over many years and they say in most cases the owners are non-responsive or there is nothing they can do.

We have watched people remove furniture, copper pipe and wire. We have cleaned up trash including needles. We have been accosted by people who say we have no right to question their trespass. We have purchased plywood to board up kicked in doors and broken windows. We have purchased enhanced outdoor lighting and security systems.

We have done everything citizens should to protect their neighborhood and homes. But still we have to endure the uncertainty of what is happening next door and worry about the hazards posed by actions of people who prefer to remain unknown and invisible. Every day we must watch for unlawful entry. This is a dangerous situation that no one at the city seems to be able to help us with.

Enough is enough.

Airport Heights is a desirable neighborhood with people improving properties and young families moving in. Most homeowners in our neighborhood have seen property taxes go up over the years. However, the tax assessments of the properties in question go down year after year because of the deteriorating condition of the structures or the owners plead hardships. Their taxes should go UP or be assessed fines due to the increased pressure they put on government services and the burden they pose to our neighborhood.

There is a housing shortage in Anchorage and the homes in question could provide housing IF the property owners fixed them up or sold them to someone who would. (though at this point they are so deteriorated, they are likely tear-downs)

We request immediate city attention at the following addresses due to the public hazards created by these deteriorated properties (see attached photos):

**1430 Columbine.** The home was at one time a rooming house which did not meet city code requirements. It has been vacant for 10 plus years and APD indicates it was a former drug/meth lab. Trees are growing through the front porch and there is a steady stream of trespassers. Multiple police and fire complaints have been filed by neighbors. Just one week ago, police were called, removed a number of people and made an arrest. Neighbors recently boarded up a broken in door.

**3343 E. 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue:** This building, right next to the property listed above, has a back entrance that has been kicked in and accessed by multiple trespassers. The building appears to have been stripped of copper pipe and wire. Neighbors boarded up the doors and broken windows.

**1535 Airport Heights Drive:** This home was vacated by the owner who suffers from mental illness. The home is secluded with a "fence" of fake Christmas trees and thick trees and bushes. A woodpile in the driveway was the source of heat. Neighbors say there is regular trespass they have been unable to stop.

**1597 Sunrise Drive:** This house has been vacant for over 20 years after ice from the roof sheared the electrical meter off the building and MLP would not reinstall due to code issues. The back of the building is completely boarded up and faces a park and street with a public walkway passing beside the structure. We understand the owner has been responsive to complaints but this does not mitigate this eyesore, and burden on neighboring properties.

**1545 Columbine:** The house on this site was demolished by the owner but a shed on the back of the unfenced property has been home to trespassers all year. The concrete foundation that remains is a four foot drop with no protective fencing.

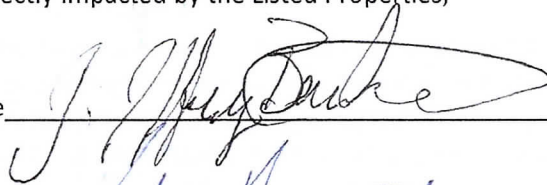
We understand the issue of abandoned or long-term vacant property is not a situation unique to Airport Heights and we also understand property rights come into play. In addition to your immediate action on the above referenced properties, we suggest creation of a task force to identify the scope of the problem across the city and to make recommendations that will resolve this unnecessary public safety and crime issue in our neighborhoods.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely

Airport Heights Neighbors Directly Impacted by the Listed Properties,

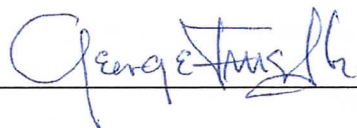
Jeff Bailey, 1413 Sunrise Drive



Helen Howarth, 1413 Sunrise Drive



George Faust, 1547 Airport Heights



Name, Address, Signature

Doug MacAlister, 3325 E 15th Doug MacAlister

Dorothy Arnold, 1419 Sunrise Dorothy Arnold

Arlene Bishop, 1334 Sunrise Drive Arlene Bishop

KATHY & BOB VASQUEZ Kathy Vasquez, Bob Vasquez  
1519 AIRPORT HIGTS. DR. - 99508

Lorraine Eckstein (907) 243-7181  
LORRAINE ECKSTEIN 1557 Airport Heights Drive

~~Bob McIntyre~~ 1922 Sunrise Drive 99508

Mike McIntyre 1922 Sunrise Dr.

Joseph A Reinheart 1542 Airport Hts. Dr. Joseph Reinheart

Raymond M. Bowman 1304 Airport Hgts dr. Pioneer Automotive

Felicitly Annua 1405 Airport Hts. Ak. Ak. 99508

Bonnie Beck 1434 Kinnikinnick 99508

Chris Marano & 1528 Kinnikinnick 99508

Kirsten Stadtmiller 1576 Columbine

Jay Johnson 1601 Sunrise 99508

Courtney Kitchen, 1406 Sunrise Dr. Courtney Kitchen

Tobey Carman, 1406 Sunrise Dr. Tobey Carman

Todd A. TACKES 1430 NORENE ST. Todd A. Tackes

BETTY R. DICKENSON 1312 SUNRISE DR. Betty R. Dickenson

Chris Martin 3325 E 15<sup>th</sup> Chris Martin

DON LENAMOND 1405 SUNRISE Don Lenamond

Bonnie Lenamond 1405 Sunrise Bonnie Lenamond

Carolyn Rjoff 1528 Knickinnick St. Unit B Carolyn Rjoff

Martha W. Freeman 1529 Sunrise Dr. Martha W. Freeman

~~John Freeman~~ 1529 Sunrise Dr. John Freeman

Sarah Freeman 1529 Sunrise Dr. Sarah Freeman

Chad Haise 3204 E. 110<sup>th</sup> Ave Chad L. Haise

KATHY & BOB VASQUEZ Kathy Vasquez, Bob Vasquez  
1519 AIRPORT HEIGHTS DR. - 99508

Scott Jordan & Margi Clifford Scott Jordan, Margi Clifford  
1527 AP HTS DRIVE - 99508

John and Stacia Thomas John Thomas, Stacia Thomas  
1562 Airport Heights Drive

Kevin Kloth and Megan Coon Kevin Kloth, Megan Coon  
1594 Airport Heights Drive

JULIE & KEN FLYNN Julie Flynn, Ken Flynn  
1663 SUNRISE DR

Michael Galgandist Kenner Lopez Michael Galgandist  
1652 Sunrise Drive

Devika Vicere Devika Vicere 2901 E 18th Ave

Eugene Vicere Eugene Vicere 2901 E- 18th Ave

Sylvia Rein Sylvia Rein 1660 Garden St.

Caitlin McCutcheon Caitlin McCutcheon 1595 Garden Street

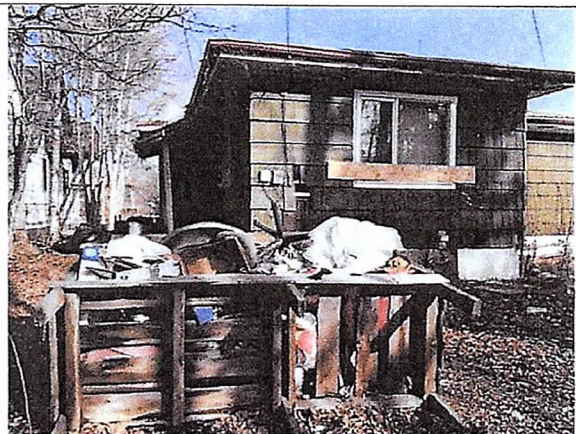
Josh Blum Josh Blum 1595 Garden St.

Roman Dial Roman Dial 1583 Garden St

Margaret Dial Margaret Dial 1583 garden St



1430 Columbine



3342 E 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue



1597 Sunrise Drive



1535 Airport Heights Dr.



1545 Columbine



1430 Columbine and 2243 E 15th