



**BERKELEY CITY COUNCIL HEALTH, LIFE ENRICHMENT, EQUITY &
COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING**

**Monday, September 23, 2019
10:00 AM**

2180 Milvia Street, 6th Floor - Redwood Room

Committee Members:

Councilmembers Rashi Kesarwani, Ben Bartlett, and Sophie Hahn

AGENDA

Roll Call

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters

Minutes for Approval

Draft minutes for the Committee's consideration and approval.

1. Minutes - September 9, 2019

Committee Action Items

The public may comment on each item listed on the agenda for action as the item is taken up. The Chair will determine the number of persons interested in speaking on each item. Up to ten (10) speakers may speak for two minutes. If there are more than ten persons interested in speaking, the Chair may limit the public comment for all speakers to one minute per speaker. Speakers are permitted to yield their time to one other speaker, however no one speaker shall have more than four minutes.

Following review and discussion of the items listed below, the Committee may continue an item to a future committee meeting, or refer the item to the City Council.

Committee Action Items

2a. Recommendations Related to Code Enforcement Actions and Leonard Powell Fact Finding

From: Housing Advisory Commission

Referred: June 11, 2019

Due: November 26, 2019

Recommendation: On June 11, 2019, the City Council referred the two Commission items to the Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community Committee to:

1. Create a policy that receivership should only be used when the property is a danger to the public, and as a last resort, and only upon approval of the Council.
2. Request an analysis of receivers and conservators by the City.
3. Send representatives from the City to the fairness hearing for Mr. Powell to raise concerns.

The original recommendation from the Housing Advisory Commission is as follows: Establish policies that will provide housing stability for homeowners and tenants. The City Council should set in place clear, objective, and equitable standards for conducting code enforcement actions and ensure that due process rights of affected homeowners and/or tenants are preserved. Commission a formal fact-finding process to ascertain what occurred in the matter of Mr. Leonard Powell. It should also refer this matter to the City Auditor. The fact finding should, among other things, focus on any actions taken by the Receiver in the case of Mr. Powell and any communications that the City has had with the Receiver. The HAC recognizes that additional steps may be necessary in regard to this matter, and may forward additional recommendations to the City Council at a later date.

Financial Implications: Staff time

Contact: Mike Uberti, Acting Commission Secretary, HHCS (510) 981-5114

2b. Recommendation to Bring Justice to Mr. Leonard Powell and to Change Certain Policies to Ensure Housing Stability for Homeowners and Tenants

From: Peace and Justice Commission

Referred: June 11, 2019

Due: November 26, 2019

Recommendation: On June 11, 2019, the City Council referred the two Commission items to the Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community Committee to:

1. Create a policy that receivership should only be used when the property is a danger to the public, and as a last resort, and only upon approval of the Council
2. Request an analysis of receivers and conservators by the City
3. Send representatives from the City to the fairness hearing for Mr. Powell to raise concerns.

The original recommendation from the Peace and Justice Commission is as follows: The Peace and Justice (PJC) recommends that the Berkeley City Council take the following actions:

Send a letter to the Superior Court Judge overseeing Mr. Leonard Powell's receivership case thanking him for the fairness and justice of his decision to deny the Bay Area Receivership Group's ongoing requests to sell Mr. Powell's home, and allowing Mr. Powell and his friends and family time to make the necessary financial arrangements.

Committee Action Items

PJC also recommends to the Berkeley City Council that it set in place the following policies that would provide housing stability for homeowners. In particular, when legal action is being attempted by the City as a result of code enforcement violations, the following practices should be put into place:

1. Punitive actions such as eviction, substantial fines, or placing an individual into legal guardianship, or receivership that are likely to result in the permanent displacement of a homeowner or their low-income tenants presently occupying or renting their home is the very last resort that city staff should take. It should only be conducted if all other attempts to resolve the situation have been unsuccessful; and should only be a response to severe code enforcement violations that cause immediate danger to life safety or have been determined by a quasi-judicial body (e.g., Zoning Adjustments Board, City Council) to endanger the health and safety of the immediate neighbors.
2. The Mayor, and Councilmember representing the district of the address in question, and Housing Advisory Commission are notified of their constituent's name (if allowed by applicable privacy laws), address, the nature of the alleged code violations, and a report detailing the status of the matter and any past, ongoing, and anticipated future attempts to resolve the matter; and
3. The City shall explore the use of anti-displacement funds to assist low-income homeowners and/or tenants residing on the premises with legal matters of forced relocation, expenses, and/or other needs as applicable and appropriate.
4. Establish a policy that code enforcement should aim to improve the safety and security of the property for its current residents and their neighbors.
5. "Reimburse" Mr. Powell, Friends of Adeline and NAACP by placing an amount not to exceed \$68,000 raised privately to pay for Receivers legal and administrative fees. These parties may collectively determine how to best use these funds.

Financial Implications: See report

Contact: Bre Slimick, Commission Secretary, (510) 981-7000

2c. Information on the City's Existing Code Enforcement Practices for Residential Properties

From: Councilmember Kesarwani

Recommendation: Request that the City Manager provide a brief report or presentation on the City's code enforcement practices for residential properties for the purposes of educating the City Council and the public on current practices.

Financial Implications: Staff time

Contact: Rashi Kesarwani, Councilmember, District 1, (510) 981-7110

2d. Draft Plan for Public Meeting on Receivership

From: Councilmember Bartlett

Contact: Ben Bartlett, Councilmember, District 3, (510) 981-7130

Unscheduled Items

These items are not scheduled for discussion or action at this meeting. The Committee may schedule these items to the Action Calendar of a future Committee meeting.

- **None**

Items for Future Agendas

- **Discussion of items to be added to future agendas**
- **Discussion of future hearings and open forums**

Adjournment

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*Written communications addressed to the Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community Committee and submitted to the City Clerk Department will be distributed to the Committee prior to the meeting.*

*This meeting will be conducted in accordance with the Brown Act, Government Code Section 54953. Members of the City Council who are not members of the standing committee may attend a standing committee meeting even if it results in a quorum being present, provided that the non-members only act as observers and do not participate in the meeting. If only one member of the Council who is not a member of the committee is present for the meeting, the member may participate in the meeting because less than a quorum of the full Council is present. Any member of the public may attend this meeting. Questions regarding this matter may be addressed to Mark Numainville, City Clerk, (510) 981-6900.*



### COMMUNICATION ACCESS INFORMATION:

This meeting is being held in a wheelchair accessible location. To request a disability-related accommodation(s) to participate in the meeting, including auxiliary aids or services, please contact the Disability Services specialist at (510) 981-6418 (V) or (510) 981-6347 (TDD) at least three business days before the meeting date. Attendees at public meetings are reminded that other attendees may be sensitive to various scents, whether natural or manufactured, in products and materials. Please help the City respect these needs.

~~~~~  
I hereby certify that the agenda for this special meeting of the Berkeley City Council was posted at the display case located near the walkway in front of the Maudelle Shirek Building, 2134 Martin Luther King Jr. Way, as well as on the City's website, on September 19, 2019.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Numainville".

Mark Numainville, City Clerk

Communications

Communications submitted to City Council Policy Committees are on file in the City Clerk Department at 2180 Milvia Street, 1st Floor, Berkeley, CA.

**BERKELEY CITY COUNCIL HEALTH, LIFE ENRICHMENT, EQUITY & COMMUNITY COMMITTEE
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES**

**Monday, September 9, 2019
10:00 AM**

2180 Milvia Street, 6th Floor - Redwood Room

Committee Members:

Councilmembers Rashi Kesarwani, Ben Bartlett, and Sophie Hahn

Roll Call: 10:06 a.m. Councilmember Kesarwani absent

Announcement: Brown Act Participation Rules: Announcement made

Councilmember Kesarwani present at 10:10 a.m.

Public Comment on Non-Agenda Matters – 2 speakers

Minutes for Approval

Draft minutes for the Committee's consideration and approval.

1. Minutes - July 8, 2019

Action: M/S/C (Kesarwani/Bartlett) to approve the minutes of July 8, 2019.

Vote: All Ayes.

Committee Action Items

The public may comment on each item listed on the agenda for action as the item is taken up. The Chair will determine the number of persons interested in speaking on each item. Up to ten (10) speakers may speak for two minutes. If there are more than ten persons interested in speaking, the Chair may limit the public comment for all speakers to one minute per speaker. Speakers are permitted to yield their time to one other speaker, however no one speaker shall have more than four minutes.

Following review and discussion of the items listed below, the Committee may continue an item to a future committee meeting, or refer the item to the City Council.

Committee Action Items

2. **Air Quality Monitoring Program**

From: Councilmembers Bartlett, Harrison, and Davila

Referred: April 8, 2019

Due: October 28, 2019

Recommendation: Referral to the Public Health Department to establish an advanced air quality monitoring program in Berkeley to provide data about how air quality in the city varies over time and between neighborhoods. To better implement this program, the City should form partnerships with technology companies, environmental research groups, and healthcare providers.

Financial Implications: See report

Contact: Ben Bartlett, Councilmember, District 3, (510) 981-7130

Action: Item withdrawn by author Councilmember Ben Bartlett.

3. **Ban Racial, Ethnic, Cultural, and Religious Discrimination on the Basis of Hairstyle or Headwear** *(Item contains revised material)*

From: Councilmembers Robinson, Davila, Bartlett, and Hahn

Referred: March 11, 2019

Due: September 15, 2019

Recommendation: Adopt a new Section of the Berkeley Municipal Code: Chapter 13.23 DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF HAIRSTYLE OR HEADWEAR IN EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING, AND PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS, prohibiting grooming or appearance policies which target natural or traditional hair, hairstyles, or headwear, and refer to the City Manager to consider the operational requirements of enforcement of the ordinance, including what effective and appropriate enforcement would entail or what amendments to the Chapter would be necessary to perform such enforcement.

Financial Implications: See report

Contact: Rigel Robinson, Councilmember, District 7, (510) 981-7170

Action: 1 speaker. Discussion held. M/S/C (Bartlett/Kesarwani) to send the item to Council with a Qualified Positive Recommendation as author needs to develop language with City Attorney's Office for enforcement and a provision to recover attorney's fees.

Vote: All Ayes.

Unscheduled Items

These items are not scheduled for discussion or action at this meeting. The Committee may schedule these items to the Action Calendar of a future Committee meeting.

4a. **Recommendations Related to Code Enforcement Actions and Leonard Powell Fact Finding**

From: Housing Advisory Commission

Referred: June 11, 2019

Due: November 26, 2019

Recommendation: On June 11, 2019, the City Council referred the two Commission items to the Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community Committee to:

1. Create a policy that receivership should only be used when the property is a danger to the public, and as a last resort, and only upon approval of the Council.
2. Request an analysis of receivers and conservators by the City.
3. Send representatives from the City to the fairness hearing for Mr. Powell to raise concerns.

The original recommendation from the Housing Advosory Commission is as follows: Establish policies that will provide housing stability for homeowners and tenants. The City Council should set in place clear, objective, and equitable standards for conducting code enforcement actions and ensure that due process rights of affected homeowners and/or tenants are preserved. Commission a formal fact-finding process to ascertain what occurred in the matter of Mr. Leonard Powell. It should also refer this matter to the City Auditor. The fact finding should, among other things, focus on any actions taken by the Receiver in the case of Mr. Powell and any communications that the City has had with the Receiver. The HAC recognizes that additional steps may be necessary in regard to this matter, and may forward additional recommendations to the City Council at a later date.

Financial Implications: Staff time

Contact: Mike Uberti, Acting Commission Secretary, HHCS (510) 981-5114

4b. **Recommendation to Bring Justice to Mr. Leonard Powell and to Change Certain Policies to Ensure Housing Stability for Homeowners and Tenants**

From: Peace and Justice Commission

Referred: June 11, 2019

Due: November 26, 2019

Recommendation: On June 11, 2019, the City Council referred the two Commission items to the Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community Committee to:

1. Create a policy that receivership should only be used when the property is a danger to the public, and as a last resort, and only upon approval of the Council
2. Request an analysis of receivers and conservators by the City
3. Send representatives from the City to the fairness hearing for Mr. Powell to raise concerns.

The original recommendation from the Peace and Justice Commission is as follows: The Peace and Justice (PJC) recommends that the Berkeley City Council take the following actions:

Send a letter to the Superior Court Judge overseeing Mr. Leonard Powell's receivership case thanking him for the fairness and justice of his decision to deny the

Unscheduled Items

Bay Area Receivership Group's ongoing requests to sell Mr. Powell's home, and allowing Mr. Powell and his friends and family time to make the necessary financial arrangements.

PJC also recommends to the Berkeley City Council that it set in place the following policies that would provide housing stability for homeowners. In particular, when legal action is being attempted by the City as a result of code enforcement violations, the following practices should be put into place:

1. Punitive actions such as eviction, substantial fines, or placing an individual into legal guardianship, or receivership that are likely to result in the permanent displacement of a homeowner or their low-income tenants presently occupying or renting their home is the very last resort that city staff should take. It should only be conducted if all other attempts to resolve the situation have been unsuccessful; and should only be a response to severe code enforcement violations that cause immediate danger to life safety or have been determined by a quasi-judicial body (e.g., Zoning Adjustments Board, City Council) to endanger the health and safety of the immediate neighbors.
2. The Mayor, and Councilmember representing the district of the address in question, and Housing Advisory Commission are notified of their constituent's name (if allowed by applicable privacy laws), address, the nature of the alleged code violations, and a report detailing the status of the matter and any past, ongoing, and anticipated future attempts to resolve the matter; and
3. The City shall explore the use of anti-displacement funds to assist low-income homeowners and/or tenants residing on the premises with legal matters of forced relocation, expenses, and/or other needs as applicable and appropriate.
4. Establish a policy that code enforcement should aim to improve the safety and security of the property for its current residents and their neighbors.
5. "Reimburse" Mr. Powell, Friends of Adeline and NAACP by placing an amount not to exceed \$68,000 raised privately to pay for Receivers legal and administrative fees. These parties may collectively determine how to best use these funds.

Financial Implications: See report

Contact: Bre Slimick, Commission Secretary, (510) 981-7000

Items for Future Agenda

- Discussion of items to be added to future agendas
- Discussion of future hearings and open forums

Adjournment

Adjourned at 10:40 a.m.

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct record of the Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community Committee meeting held on September 9, 2019.

April Richardson, Assistant City Clerk

Communications

Communications submitted to City Council Policy Committees are on file in the City Clerk Department at 2180 Milvia Street, 1st Floor, Berkeley, CA.



Housing Advisory Commission

2a

ACTION CALENDAR
June 11, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Housing Advisory Commission
Submitted by: Xavier Johnson, Chairperson, Housing Advisory Commission
Subject: Recommendations Related to Code Enforcement Actions and Leonard Powell Fact Finding

RECOMMENDATION

Establish policies that will provide housing stability for homeowners and tenants. The City Council should set in place clear, objective, and equitable standards for conducting code enforcement actions and ensure that due process rights of affected homeowners and/or tenants are preserved.

Commission a formal fact-finding process to ascertain what occurred in the matter of Mr. Leonard Powell. It should also refer this matter to the City Auditor. The fact finding should, among other things, focus on any actions taken by the Receiver in the case of Mr. Powell and any communications that the City has had with the Receiver. The HAC recognizes that additional steps may be necessary in regard to this matter, and may forward additional recommendations to the City Council at a later date.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Staff time.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Several years ago, the City of Berkeley's code enforcement department was alerted to possible code violations at 1911 Harmon St. owned by Leonard Powell. The City requested that Mr. Powell address these violations. Although Mr. Powell arranged for some work to be done (and received a \$100,000 loan from the City's Senior and Disabled Home Rehabilitation Program) to do this work, not all of the violations cited by the City were addressed. Since Mr. Powell did not correct all the violations, the City petitioned the court to appoint a receiver to bring the house into code compliance. However, many more repairs were made, bringing the total costs to over \$600,000.

The house is now certified by the City for occupancy. However, Mr. Powell faces additional costs which exceed the amount that was provided to him through public loans.

BACKGROUND

Mr. Powell, a veteran and retired U.S. Postal worker had purchased the house at 1911 Harmon Street over forty years ago as a home for himself and family. Since purchasing the duplex house, which Mr. Powell converted to a single family home, there had been no major repairs made by him. The conversion from a duplex to a single family home was done without permits and inspections.

Mr. Powell's situation has triggered public concern that he has not been treated fairly, and concerns of inequitable treatment of a Berkeley resident have been raised. The HAC believes that more fact finding will be very beneficial for the Berkeley community for three main reasons. (1) What triggered the code enforcement actions specifically against Mr. Powell, when in fact, there are many single family homes in various neighborhoods throughout the City (including the hills) that lack code compliance? (2) How did costs increase so quickly, so that the costs of repair are almost equivalent to the costs of new construction (excluding land)? (3) How can lower- and moderate-income households be protected from displacement if similar code enforcement actions are taken by the City and if these owners do not have access to financing to address these violations?

The Housing Advisory Action adopted the following motion at its March 7, 2019 meeting:

Action: M/S/C (Tregub/Wolfe) to recommend to City Council that it set in place the policies that would provide housing stability for homeowners and tenants. The City Council should set in place clear, objective, and equitable standards for conducting code enforcement actions and ensure that due process rights of affected homeowners and/or tenants are preserved. In addition, the HAC recommends that the City Council commission a formal fact-finding process to ascertain what occurred in the matter of Mr. Powell. It should also refer this matter to the City Auditor. The fact finding should, among other things, focus on any actions taken by the Receiver in the case of Mr. Powell and any communications that the City has had with the Receiver. The HAC recognizes that additional steps may be necessary in regard to this matter, and may forward additional recommendations to the City Council at a later date.

Vote: Ayes: Abdesahian, Johnson, Sharenko, Simon-Weisberg, Tregub, Wolfe and Wright. Noes: None. Abstain: Lord. Absent: Owens (excused) and Sargent (excused).

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

This recommendation to undertake fact finding into what happened at 1911 Harmon Street does not impact the environment directly. However, if this recommendation ultimately reduces displacement, then this could contribute to reductions in vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emission reductions.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This recommendation is an important complement to ongoing local, regional, and state efforts to prevent displacement due to code violations that exceed households' abilities to pay. Both renters and homeowners can be negatively impacted by these code violations. Therefore efforts to address them in a constructive and expeditious manner would be consistent with the HAC's and City of Berkeley's other ongoing priorities.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

The Housing Advisory Commission will be examining ways to assist lower- and moderate-income homeowners in the future whose homes have code violations, but who lack the financing to abate all the violations in a timely manner.

CITY MANAGER

See companion report.

CONTACT PERSON

Mike Uberti, Acting Commission Secretary, HHCS, (510) 981-5114



Peace and Justice Commission

2b

ACTION CALENDAR
June 11, 2019

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
From: Peace and Justice Commission
Submitted by: Igor Tregub, Chairperson, Housing Advisory Commission
Subject: Recommendation to Bring Justice to Mr. Leonard Powell and to Change Certain Policies to Ensure Housing Stability for Homeowners and Tenants

RECOMMENDATION

The Peace and Justice (PJC) recommends that the Berkeley City Council take the following actions:

The Peace and Justice Commission (PJC) recommends that the City Council send a letter to the Superior Court Judge overseeing Mr. Leonard Powell's receivership case thanking him for the fairness and justice of his decision to deny the Bay Area Receivership Group's ongoing requests to sell Mr. Powell's home, and allowing Mr. Powell and his friends and family time to make the necessary financial arrangements.

PJC also recommends to the Berkeley City Council that it set in place the following policies that would provide housing stability for homeowners. In particular, when legal action is being attempted by the City as a result of code enforcement violations, the following practices should be put into place:

1. Punitive actions such as eviction, substantial fines, or placing an individual into legal guardianship, or receivership that are likely to result in the permanent displacement of a homeowner or their low-income tenants presently occupying or renting their home is the very last resort that city staff should take. It should only be conducted if all other attempts to resolve the situation have been unsuccessful; and should only be a response to severe code enforcement violations that cause immediate danger to life safety or have been determined by a quasi-judicial body (e.g., Zoning Adjustments Board, City Council) to endanger the health and safety of the immediate neighbors.
2. The Mayor, and Councilmember representing the district of the address in question, and Housing Advisory Commission are notified of their constituent's name (if allowed by applicable privacy laws), address, the nature of the alleged

code violations, and a report detailing the status of the matter and any past, ongoing, and anticipated future attempts to resolve the matter; and

3. The City shall explore the use of anti-displacement funds to assist *low-income* homeowners and/or tenants residing on the premises with legal matters of *forced* relocation, expenses, and/or other needs as applicable and appropriate.
4. Establish a policy that code enforcement should aim to improve the safety and security of the property for its current residents and their neighbors.
5. "Reimburse" Mr. Powell, Friends of Adeline and NAACP by placing an amount not to exceed \$68,000 raised privately to pay for Receivers legal and administrative fees. These parties may collectively determine how to best use these funds.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Staff time and up to \$68,000 if recommendation (5) above is adopted.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Several years ago, the City of Berkeley's code enforcement department was alerted to possible code violations at 1911 Harmon St. owned by Leonard Powell. The City requested that Mr. Powell address these violations. Although Mr. Powell arranged for some work to be done (and received a \$100,000 loan from the City's Senior and Disabled Home Rehabilitation Program) to do this work, not all of the violations cited by the City were addressed. Since Mr. Powell did not correct all the violations, the City petitioned the court to appoint a receiver to bring the house into code compliance. However, many more repairs were made, bringing the total costs to over \$600,000.

The house is now certified by the City for occupancy. However, Mr. Powell faces additional costs which exceed the amount that was provided to him through public loans.

BACKGROUND

At its regularly scheduled March 4, 2019 meeting, the PJC took the following action:

Action: To authorize the Chair to draft proposed letter from the Council to the judge and adopt recommendations to council as amended

Motion by: Lippman

Seconded by: Bohn

Ayes: al-Bazian, Bohn, Chen, Gussmann, Lippman, Maran, Meola, Morizawa, Pierce, Rodriguez, Tregub

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Han, Pancoast

Mr. Powell, a veteran and retired U.S. Postal worker had purchased the house at 1911 Harmon Street over forty years ago as a home for himself and family. Since purchasing the duplex house, which Mr. Powell converted to a single family home, there had been no major repairs made by him. The conversion from a duplex to a single family home was done without permits and inspections.

Mr. Powell's situation has triggered public concern that he has not been treated fairly, and concerns of inequitable treatment of a Berkeley resident have been raised. The PJC believes that more fact finding will be very beneficial for the Berkeley community for three main reasons. (1) What triggered the code enforcement actions specifically against Mr. Powell, when in fact, there are many single family homes in various neighborhoods throughout the City (including the hills) that lack code compliance? (2) How did costs increase so quickly, so that the costs of repair are almost equivalent to the costs of new construction (excluding land)? (3) How can lower- and moderate-income households be protected from displacement if similar code enforcement actions are taken by the City and if these owners do not have access to financing to address these violations? Further, the PJC feels that adoption of these recommendations would ensure that the City take steps to make Mr. Powell whole and allow him to recover possession of his property upon the abatement of any remaining code violations.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

These recommendations do not impact the environment directly. However, if the application of these recommendations ultimately reduces displacement, then this could contribute to reductions in vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gas emission reductions.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

These recommendations are an important complement to ongoing local, regional, and state efforts to prevent displacement due to code violations that exceed households' abilities to pay. They are also consistent with the Peace and Justice Commission's charter and goals.

ALTERNATIVE ACTIONS CONSIDERED

Several additional recommendations were also suggested to the PJC by community members. The PJC elected to focus only on those recommendations that it deemed to be most constructive toward the achievement of the goals enumerated above and resulting in interests that further equity and justice for Berkeley homeowners and tenants.

CITY MANAGER

See companion report.

CONTACT PERSON

Breanne Slimick, Associate Management Analyst, 981-7018

Attachments:

1. Letter to Judge Brand

**RESOLUTION
IN SUPPORT OF BRINGING JUSTICE TO MR. LEONARD POWELL AND TO
CHANGE CERTAIN POLICIES TO ENSURE HOUSING STABILITY FOR
HOMEOWNERS AND TENANTS**

Whereas Mr. Powell, a veteran and retired U.S. Postal worker had purchased the house at 1911 Harmon Street over forty years ago as a home for himself and family; and

Whereas since purchasing the duplex house, which Mr. Powell converted to a single family home, there had been no major repairs made by him; and

Whereas the conversion from a duplex to a single family home was done without permits and inspections; and

Whereas several years ago, the City of Berkeley's code enforcement department was alerted to possible code violations at 1911 Harmon St. owned by Leonard Powell; and

Whereas although Mr. Powell arranged for some work to be done (and received a \$100,000 loan from the City's Senior and Disabled Home Rehabilitation Program) to do this work, not all of the violations cited by the City were addressed; and

Whereas since Mr. Powell did not correct all the violations, the City petitioned the court to appoint a receiver to bring the house into code compliance; and

Whereas many more repairs were made than were requested, bringing the total costs to over \$600,000; and

Whereas the house is now certified by the City for occupancy; and

Whereas Mr. Powell faces additional costs which exceed the amount that was provided to him through public loans; and

Whereas Mr. Powell's situation has triggered public concern that he has not been treated fairly, and concerns of inequitable treatment of a Berkeley resident have been raised; and

Whereas at its regularly scheduled March 4, 2019 meeting, the Berkeley Peace and Justice Commission (PJC) took the following action:

Action: To authorize the Chair to draft proposed letter from the Council to the judge and adopt recommendations to council as amended

Motion by: Lippman

Seconded by: Bohn

Ayes: al-Bazian, Bohn, Chen, Gussmann, Lippman, Maran, Meola, Morizawa, Pierce, Rodriguez, Tregub

Noes: None

Abstain: None

Absent: Han, Pancoast; and

; and

Whereas the Peace and Justice Commission (PJC) recommends that the City Council send a letter to the Superior Court Judge overseeing Mr. Leonard Powell's receivership case thanking him for the fairness and justice of his decision to deny the Bay Area Receivership Group's ongoing requests to sell Mr. Powell's home, and allowing Mr. Powell and his friends and family time to make the necessary financial arrangements; and

Whereas PJC also recommends to the Berkeley City Council that it set in place the following policies that would provide housing stability for homeowners. In particular, when legal action is being attempted by the City as a result of code enforcement violations, the following practices should be put into place:

1. Punitive actions such as eviction, substantial fines, or placing an individual into legal guardianship, or receivership that are likely to result in the permanent displacement of a homeowner or their low-income tenants presently occupying or renting their home is the very last resort that city staff should take. It should only be conducted if all other attempts to resolve the situation have been unsuccessful; and should only be a response to severe code enforcement violations that cause immediate danger to life safety or have been determined by a quasi-judicial body (e.g., Zoning Adjustments Board, City Council) to endanger the health and safety of the immediate neighbors.
2. The Mayor, and Councilmember representing the district of the address in question, and Housing Advisory Commission are notified of their constituent's name (if allowed by applicable privacy laws), address, the nature of the alleged code violations, and a report detailing the status of the matter and any past, ongoing, and anticipated future attempts to resolve the matter; and
3. The City shall explore the use of anti-displacement funds to assist *low-income* homeowners and/or tenants residing on the premises with legal matters of *forced* relocation, expenses, and/or other needs as applicable and appropriate.
4. Establish a policy that code enforcement should aim to improve the safety and security of the property for its current residents and their neighbors.
5. "Reimburse" Mr. Powell, Friends of Adeline and NAACP by placing an amount not to exceed \$68,000 raised privately to pay for Receivers legal and administrative fees. These parties may collectively determine how to best use these funds; and

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that the Berkeley City Council adopt the actions recommended by the PJC.



2c

Rashi Kesarwani
Councilmember District 1

POLICY COMMITTEE
Sept. 23rd, 2019

To: Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community Committee
From: Councilmember Rashi Kesarwani
Subject: Information on the City's Existing Code Enforcement Practices for Residential Properties

RECOMMENDATION

Request that the City Manager provide a brief report or presentation on the City's code enforcement practices for residential properties for the purposes of educating the City Council and the public on current practice. The requested information may include:

- Reporting on the various ways in which code enforcement issues have been brought to the attention of the City over the last five years (i.e., neighbor complaint, 911 call to the property, etc.)
- How various code enforcement issues at residential properties are currently handled (i.e., which City departments and which type of staff are involved, what they do, etc.)
- Timeframe and mechanisms for achieving code compliance at residential properties
- Any existing assistance programs available to support property owners found to have code violations
- Specific learnings/change in City practices resulting from the Leonard Powell receivership case
- Other information deemed relevant and appropriate to understand the City's current code enforcement practices for resident properties

FISCAL IMPACTS OF RECOMMENDATION

Staff time.

BACKGROUND

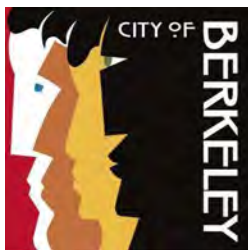
The proposed recommendation is made in partial response to a June 11, 2019 referral from the City Council to the Health, Life Enrichment, Equity & Community Committee on recommendations from the Housing Advisory Commission and Peace and Justice Commission related to the Leonard Powell case.

RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

This request seeks to clarify for both the City Council and the general public existing code enforcement practices for residential properties.

CONTACT PERSON

Rashi Kesarwani, Councilmember, District 1, 510.981.7110



Councilmember Ben Bartlett

City of Berkeley, District
2180 Milvia Street, 5th Floor
Berkeley, CA 94704
PHONE: 510-981-7130
EMAIL: bbartlett@cityofberkeley.info

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September 23rd, 2019

Draft Plan for Public Meeting on Receivership

Format of the Public Meeting:

1. Community Panel discussing their experience
2. Take Public Comments
3. Presentation from City Staff/ Departments
4. Councilmembers make comments
5. Take questions from Public
 - a. 5-10 questions at a time
6. City/Panel answers questions
7. Councilmembers make comments
8. A second round of questions if time permits

Goals for the meeting and what's to be presented:

- Understand how receivership works
- City of Berkeley's role in receivership
- Who ends up under receivership
 - Circumstances leading to receivership
- Opportunities/Challenges
 - Listening session: Hear from the community

Potential invites

Departments:

Planning/ Code-Enforcement Department
City Manager/ City Attorney Office
City Finance Department

City Staff (from Community Input):

Greg Daniel – Director of Code Enforcement
Mark Adams – Berkeley City Inspector
Alex Roshal – Official in Berkeley Housing Dept.
Raquel Molina – Official in Berkeley Housing Dept.
Shallon Allen – Official in Berkeley Finance Dept.
Brent Nelson – Housing Dept. Inspector
Zach Cowan – Berkeley City Attorney
Savith Iyengar – Deputy City Attorney
Laura McKinney – Deputy City Attorney
Dee Williams-Ridley – Berkeley City Manager
Farimah Brown – City Attorney

Community members (from Community Input):

Leonard Powell – Owner of the house
Roland Powell – Mr. Powell's son
Audrey Shields – Current Attorney for Mr. Powell
Gerard Keena – Court-appointed receiver
Nathaniel Marston – Attorney for Mr. Keena
Steve Martinot – Writer, reporter on the affair, member of Friends of Adeline
Willie Phillips – Community Organizer, Member of Friends of Adeline
Eugene Turitz – Writer on the affair, Member of Friends of Adeline
Mr. Willis and members of the Probate Court protest group
Manuel Juarez – Attorney for Mr. Powell

