



[Home](#) / [Council Documents](#)

24-2023

Communication

Request of Amber Barnes to address Council regarding nuisance property in Kenton neighborhood

Placed on File

A brief description of Communication: Nuisance property is a threat to health and safety in Kenton, residents are at their wits end

Agenda Items

24 Communications in [January 11, 2023 Council Agenda](#)

Placed on File

Requested Agenda Type

Communications

Date and Time Information

Requested Council Date

January 11, 2023

Good Morning Mayor and Commissioners,

My name is Amber Barnes and I am a resident of the Kenton neighborhood in North Portland and am here today, along with several of my neighbors, to ask for your attention and action in helping us restore peace and safety to our neighborhood and the Kenton Community Garden.

PPB's North Precinct will be submitting 2723 N Houghton Street as a chronic nuisance property to the City Attorney's office this month, pursuant to City Code.

We implore you to work swiftly to authorize the City Attorney to commence legal proceedings to abate this chronic nuisance to the fullest extent possible under law. It is clear to our neighborhood that the residents of this property have no intention of taking action to improve conditions and have no concern for their neighbors or the safety of our community.

For years, the residents near our block have been unable to live with any sense of safety or security due to the actions of the residents of this property and the people they allow to visit and live on and around the house. The owner of this house died in 2020, and her relatives have yet to initiate the probate process and are instead using the property as a hub for a myriad of criminal and nuisance activities.

Since my partner and I moved in next door to this property a year ago, we have:

- made calls and online reports to all city agencies
- awoken in the middle of the night to explosions, screaming, fighting, banging, and, most alarming, gunshots.
- opened our doors to find police with K9 units chasing a carjacking suspect through our yard, finding them hiding out at this property

Neighbors found a firearm discarded by a resident of this property in their bushes and another resident hiding from the police in a neighbor's garage.

Recent media reports show that since 2018, over 300 911 calls have been made because of this property.

Gardeners showing up to care for their plots have been harassed, and have had their access blocked by stolen vehicles and campers.

It is exhausting, it is traumatizing, and it is a drain on our neighborhood and our city resources.

It took several months of all of us making regular phone calls to 311 and online reporting to pdxreporter.org, for PBOT, with a PPB escort, to finally tag and remove several cars, trailers, and RVs from our block that were associated with this property and constituted a growing encampment that included the dumping of raw sewage into the street on multiple occasions.

All of this has reached a dangerous tipping point--one that we fear is going to continue to escalate and result in people being severely injured or even killed. Since the cars and trailers were tagged at the end of December, the two neighbors directly across the street from this property have had their bedroom windows and car windows shot out in retaliation, while children were asleep inside the home.

This property more than meets the requirements for a public nuisance designation. I know that you recently reorganized the bureaus, in part to streamline livability and safety concerns like these. That's good news because we've done all that we can as a neighborhood and as responsible community members: we've worked with associations, bureaus, and first responders for over more than a year. It's now time for the City to act.

There is so much more that will not fit into three minutes.

We would appreciate a follow up meeting with the Mayor's office, Commissioner Ryan, and anyone else who is able to help.

Thank you.

Amber Barnes

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