



City of
San Bernardino

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Court Appoints Receiver to Oversee Former American Sports University Dormitory in San Bernardino

(San Bernardino, Calif. – February 1, 2024) – The San Bernardino Superior Court has placed the former American Sports University Dormitory, located at 340 West Fourth Street under receivership. In a ruling dated January 18, 2024, Judge Thomas Garza appointed Richardson Griswold of Griswold Law in Encinitas as Receiver.

“We are pleased that Judge Garza has granted our motion to appoint a Receiver,” said San Bernardino City Manager Charles Montoya. “He agreed that the site conditions have likely worsened since we made our initial request for a receiver a year ago and the property poses a danger to the community.”

Under the powers granted by the Court, Griswold is authorized 1) to rehabilitate the property; 2) demolish the building, or 3) sell the property to an entity who will promptly undertake the rehabilitation and correct the identified deficiencies and violations.

Receiver Richardson “Red” Griswold has extensive experience as a court appointed receiver. He has been appointed by over 180 California courts in 21 different California counties, including appointments related to health & safety, rents, post-judgment, and partition matters. Griswold also acts as an expert witness in cases involving habitability standards. He will report directly to Judge Garza and will enforce the judge’s orders to protect the building from additional break-ins and damage.

In its ruling, the court found “the substandard conditions on the Subject Property are ongoing and will likely persist unless this Court appoints a receiver to take possession of the Subject Property and undertake responsibility for its rehabilitation.”

The court found that the property is a public nuisance and is being maintained in a manner that violates State and local laws. The violations at the property are so extensive and of such a nature that the health and safety of neighboring residents and the general public is substantially endangered.

The court stated that the property owners did not comply with City issued notices and orders to correct the substandard conditions, despite being afforded a reasonable opportunity to correct the conditions.

The court also ordered that Ji Li, Fox Property Holdings, and its representatives are prohibited from entering the building without the Receiver's permission, making any changes to existing insurance policies, selling or encumbering the building, or collecting rents or other income from the building.

The property at 340 West 4th Street has been a challenging property for several years. Used as an unpermitted housing facility by Ji Li and Fox Property Holdings, tenants were subjected to unsafe and unlivable conditions including black mold, inoperative fire alarms and sprinklers, blocked fire escapes, and insect and rodent infestations.

San Bernardino had been working through the Civil Court process to take control of the building the past eighteen months. In that time, Ji Li and Fox Property Holdings of Irwindale, have ignored court orders, including a September 2022 Temporary Restraining Order requiring them to pay to relocate tenants and make all required repairs to the building.

Due to the unsafe conditions, on August 17, 2023, the City of San Bernardino red tagged the building, relocating the tenants that still remained. Despite boarding up the property, there have been repeated fires and break-ins.

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