



CITY OF KENNER

PRESS RELEASE

MICHAEL S. YENNI
MAYOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Sept, 15, 2014

AFTER NEARLY TWO DECADES, MAYOR MICHAEL YENNI PUSHES THROUGH DEMOLITION OF DRIFTWOOD EYESORE

Kenner, LA. – An unfinished, two-story structure in the Driftwood subdivision, the subject of code enforcement violations and legal actions for nearly 20 years, is being scheduled for demolition that will take place under the administration of Kenner Mayor Michael S. Yenni.

The Jumonville property, located at 50 Granada Drive, was purchased in 1987. Despite some initial renovations during the next six years, the condition of the property began to deteriorate and the City of Kenner's first legal action against the property took place in 1995.

"Several administrations have attempted to remove this dangerous eyesore, and I'm proud to say that the actual demolition will take place under my watch," Kenner Mayor Michael Yenni said. "We have been frustrated by legal delay after legal delay, but the promise I made to the community was one that I took very seriously," he said.

The condition of the structure has frustrated Driftwood subdivision residents for decades, who since 2004 have called in 55 different code enforcement violations on the property for issues ranging from high grass and abandoned vehicles to dangerous conditions, said Aimee Vallot, director of the Kenner Code Enforcement Department.

Over the years, Kenner officials battled the Jumonville family over the Granada Drive property and another property on Martinique Avenue. Led by the City Attorney and Code Enforcement Director, the Martinique Avenue property was finally torn down in August, 2009.

In April, 2013, Yenni testified about the long history of problems at the property and the habit of the owners to make promises but never follow through with any significant improvements to the property. The April hearing to order the demolition of the property included eight recent code enforcement violations from an inspection on Feb. 28. Those violations included exposed steel reinforcement bars, rotting siding, exposed roof decking and voids under the roof decking.

The City Council voted to approve the demolition. Placide J. Jumonville, III's appeals earlier this year to both the 24th Judicial District Court in Gretna and the state appellate court were denied, as was a writ application to the state Supreme Court.

"All the city ever wanted was for the owner to work with us and renovate this property," Yenni said. "But when it was clear that would not happen, it became a safety issue and a matter of integrity to follow through and get this done for the residents of Driftwood."

###