

ATTORNEYS AT LAW . ESTABLISHED 1785

coopererving.com

MICHAEL A. KORNSTEIN SUSAN CARROLL PICOTTE PHILLIP G. STECK KELLY L. MALLOY POGODA DAVID C. ROWLEY CARLO A.C. DE OLIVEIRA ±

DENNIS W. HABEL CAROLINE W. T. LANG BRETT D. FRENCH ± COLIN D. DWYER

*ALSO ADMITTED IN VERMONT ±ALSO ADMITTED IN MASSACHUSETTS COOPER ERVING & SAVAGE LLP
39 NORTH PEARL STREET
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12207-2797
(518) 449-3900
FACSIMILE (518) 432-3111

CLIFTON PARK OFFICE
1520 CRESCENT ROAD - SUITE 400
CLIFTON PARK, NEW YORK 12065
(518) 371-0716

SARATOGA SPRINGS OFFICE
63 PUTNAM STREET
SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK 12866
(518) 244-8918

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER (1888-1938) WM. VAN RENSSELAER ERVING (1925-1940) B. JERMAIN SAVAGE (1910-1952)

SENIOR COUNSEL
TERRANCE P. CHRISTENSON

OF COUNSEL
CHRISTOPHER P. FLINT*
PAUL F. DWYER
DAVID R. GREEN
CAROLYN B. GEORGE

REPLY TO ALBANY OFFICE BFRENCH@COOPERERVING.COM DIRECT DIAL: (518) 432-3124

February 26, 2020

Via Electronic Mail

Board of Zoning Appeals
Department of Planning and Development
City of Albany New York
200 Henry Johnson Blvd.
Albany, New York 12210
E: bza@albanyny.gov

Re: Public Hearing, February 26, 2020 Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street

Dear City of Albany Board of Zoning Appeals:

Please take notice that Cooper Erving & Savage LLP continues to represent the owner and operators of Delaware Grocery, located at 36 Judson Street, Albany, New York 12206, with regard to the Complaint of Nuisance, brought in the Matter of the Application of CHRISTOPHER SPENCER, Chief Planning Official for the city of Albany & JAHMEL ROBINSON, City of Albany Council Member for the Fifth Ward for an Order by City of Albany Board of Zoning Appeals Finding 36 Judson Street to be a Nuisance, dated December 12, 2019 (hereinafter referred to as "the Nuisance Complaint"). Please accept this letter and the referenced exhibits attached hereto as a pre-hearing submission on behalf of the owners and operators of Delaware Grocery, located at 36 Judson Street. We respectfully request that the Board of Zoning Appeals dismiss the Nuisance Complaint as insufficient on its face and unfounded in its claims that Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street is a general nuisance or hazard to the health, safety, welfare of uses or structures within 200 feet of 36 Judson Street.

The Nuisance Complaint alleges to be brought pursuant to Albany City Code §375-5(G)(5)(a)(i). §375-5(G)(5)(a)(i) of the City of Albany Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance ("USDO"), provides the following:

- (a) Upon the following circumstances, the Board of Zoning Appeals shall hold a public hearing and make a finding with respect to the nuisance or hazardous condition that exists and shall determine the necessity of terminating such nuisance:
- (i) A complaint registered by the Chief Planning Official signed by 50 percent of the property owners within 200 feet of a lot or building, or the Common Council member in whose award such lot or building is situated, that the lot or the use of the property or building is considered to be a general nuisance or hazard to the health, safety, welfare of uses or structures within 200 feet of such use or uses ...

USDO at $\S375-5(G)(5)(a)(i)$; *Emphasis added*. With regard to the definition for general nuisance, although the USDO is relatively sparse, $\S375-4(J)(1)(a)(xi)$, which defines the operating standards for all structures, uses, and activities within the City, provides that "[a]ll structures and land uses within the City **shall be constructed, used, operated, and maintained** in such a manner so as to be free of nuisances, as defined in state law". USDO at $\S375-4(J)(1)(a)(xi)$; Emphasis added.

The Nuisance Complaint alleges that 36 Judson Street is nuisance property which continues willfully to be operated as a nuisance in a manner which has a significant and unduly negative impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of its neighbors and the West Hill Neighborhood. Except for this general claim, nothing is purported in the Nuisance Complaint to define or describe exactly how Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street "continues willfully to be operated as a nuisance". Without describing the nuisance itself, or in what ways the store is being operated causing it to be a nuisance, the Nuisance Complaint conclusively alleges "[t]he nuisance at 36 Judson Street has resulted in three shooting deaths in its vicinity in the last year ... along with a continuous and unbroken pattern of incidents which have seriously undermined the safety and livability of the West Hill Neighborhood". The Nuisance Complaint then lists off a string of acts of deadly or near deadly violence, claiming that such violence has occurred at or near 36 Judson Street, and again concludes that if 36 Judson Street is not addressed, that it is only a matter of time before further intractable violence occurs. At no point does the Nuisance Complaint allege a nexus to the alleged violence at or near 36 Judson Street, and Delaware Grocery, with its owners or operators. Nor does the Nuisance Complaint explain in what manner 36 Judson Street is being used, operated, or maintained, that is causing the store to be a nuisance, as is defined by USDO §375-4(J)(1)(a)(xi).

The fact is, Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street is not a general nuisance. It is not operated in a way that creates or contributes to a general nuisance, and no evidence exists except for claiming that Delaware Grocery is within a general vicinity of violent acts that have occurred in the past and at one point, possibly, the individuals who were involved in such violent acts

were previously patrons of Delaware Grocery. The Nuisance Complaint would cause the Zoning Board of Appeals to believe the mere existence of Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street is a general nuisance because it happens to be located in an area where violent acts have occurred in the past. By this logic, the homes and buildings surrounding 36 Judson Street could also be deemed nuisance properties, as they have nothing to do with the violence either, but they happen to be located near to where such acts have allegedly occurred; the City of Albany Police Department at 165 Henry Johnson Blvd., located only two blocks from 36 Judson Street could be deemed a nuisance property due to its proximity to such allegedly intractable violence, and the operation of the Police Department that has failed to curb the alleged violence; moreover, the City of Albany as a whole could be deemed a nuisance city by this logic, as violent crime occurs within the city, thus the City of Albany must be operating in a manner that amounts to a general nuisance. Now, of course these hypothetical examples are not true, but their use as examples should highlight the circular and self-serving nature of the illogical Nuisance Complaint.

In addition to making conclusory claims that Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson is a general nuisance due to its alleged proximity to unrelated violent crimes that occur in this neighborhood, included with the Nuisance Complaint, allegedly in support of the claims, was a 238 page printout from the City of Albany Police Department for police department calls allegedly "related" to 36 Judson Street (hereinafter referred to as the "police logs") spanning from 2017 through 2019. The police logs should be all but disregarded in any manner that would somehow be viewed in a light negative to Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street, and should in fact be used as evidence to support the claim that Delaware Grocery does not operate in a manner that causes or contributes to a general nuisance, if any exists in the first place. The 238 page printout is duplicative, and actually restarts with a second copy of the police logs at page 120 of the PDF Police Logs file. In an effort to make sense of the random order and repition of the police logs, attached hereto as **Exhibit "A"** is an excel spreadsheet produced by the undersigned's firm, organizing the police logs by date, caller, alleged location, alleged nature of call, and the stated resolution. See **Exhibit "A"** for a clearer picture of what the police logs actually depict.

Contained within the police logs there are 93 distinct calls or logs with dispatch, allegedly representing police activity allegedly in relation to 36 Judson Street. Though, when reviewing the logs in detail, it is clear that these police logs do not support an argument that Delaware Grocery and 36 Judson exist as a general nuisance, and/or are operated in a way in which causes or contributes to such. Of the 93 logs, 26, almost one third, represent unsolicited "property checks", where an officer apparently drove by 36 Judson Street, viewed the property, logged a property check with dispatch, and continued driving. Of the remaining 67 logs, an additional 18 deal with complaints that went unsubstantiated or were cleared immediately upon police arrival, or deal with issues that are unrelated to Delaware Grocery or the property address, such as traffic accidents at an intersection or a sick person near the store. Finally, of the remaining ~ 49 logs, approximately 25 of the logs were as a result of calls by the operators of Delaware Grocery contacting the police department and/or providing assistance to the police department with regard to issues of customers or neighborhood residents loitering outside of the store or posing a danger to other store customers and neighborhood residents. None of the police log entries speak to a nexus between Delaware Grocery and any violence in the neighborhood, or in some way highlight that the manner of operation of Delaware Grocery somehow contributes to

or causes a general nuisance. <u>There is no allegation in the complaint that the operators of Delaware Grocery are doing something that they should not be doing.</u>

Despite the lack of validity of the Nuisance Complaint, and failure to allege any nexus or explanation of how Delaware Grocery is operating in a way that constitutes a general nuisance, the following information and evidence in defense of Delaware Grocery and in opposition to the Nuisance Complaint is irrefutable:

- (1) The allegations contained within the Nuisance Complaint that deadly violence and other acts of extreme violence occur at or near Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street is inaccurate and an over-simplification of the geography of the surrounding neighborhood. Again, as noted above in the hypotheticals, the local geography of the West Hill Neighborhood, and mere proximity of Delaware Grocery to violent acts perpetrated against individuals who happened to be residents of the same area, cannot arbitrarily be blamed on Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson, an immovable location. A statement by Mustafa Nagi attesting to the inaccuracy of the allegations of the Nuisance Complaint with regard to the violence that has occurred and lack of involvement in any way by Delaware Grocery is attached hereto as **Exhibit "B"**. Significantly, all of the alleged incidents of violence occurred outside of the store- on public property.
- (2) Notwithstanding the false allegations contained within the Nuisance Complaint, the health, safety and welfare of the neighborhood surrounding Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street is improved and contributed to in a positive manner by Delaware Grocery. Delaware Grocery has exceptional relationships with members of the community, as well as its trade partners, and has been a necessary and valued resource serving the vital needs of the community for many years. Multiple copies of a Petition in Support of Delaware Grocery, with approximately 153 signatures of residents of the City of Albany and West Hill Neighborhood and Fifth Ward, as well as approximately 19 additional pages of signatures in general support of Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street are attached hereto as Exhibit "C".
- (3) With regard to the allegations contained within the Nuisance Complaint pertaining to a November 18, 2019 inspection by the City of Albany Buildings Department which allegedly found multiple building code violations at 36 Judson Street, all such alleged violations were resolved within days of notice to Delaware Grocery, and the code violations were cleared by the City of Albany Buildings Department on December 23, 2019. There are no active zoning code violations for Delaware Grocer and 36 Judson Street, and historically, the property has rarely if ever been cited for code violations, always to resolve such violations within a day or two of notice. A copy of the Buildings Department Case Report highlighting the cleared status of the alleged violations is attached hereto as Exhibit "D".
- (4) Delaware Grocery located at 36 Judson Street, and its owner and operators conduct business in a legal manner. There are no allegations against Delaware Grocery of penal code violations or violations of any other regulations by way of the operation of the business. On all occasions requested, Delaware Grocery and its operators have assisted

the Albany City Police Department with investigations of criminal conduct, and further make sure to contact the Police Department should criminal activities or loitering be taking place near or at the store. The Nuisance Complaint seeks to penalize Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson by highlighting police logs that are indicative of police calls by operators of Delaware Grocery. If Delaware Grocery calls the police for assistance, the very calls can be used as evidence of being a nuisance, but if Delaware Grocery does not call the police for assistance, their failure to call would be viewed as failing to prevent the violence from occurring. It would appear that Delaware Grocery is damned if they do, and damned if they don't. A photo of Delaware Grocery's prominent "No Loitering" sign displayed next to the front door of the store is attached hereto as **Exhibit "E"**.

- (5) The owners and operators of Delaware Grocery have complied with any requests concerning the operation of the grocery store made by the City. When City officials requested the store close an hour earlier, the store owners complied. Moreover, the operators of the grocery store have consistently cooperated with the Albany City Police Department in its investigation of crimes in the West Hill neighborhood.
- (6) Notwithstanding the fact that Delaware Grocery and at 36 Judson Street is not an insurer of all illegal or tortious activity inside or outside of the premises, especially such which has no nexus or relationship to Delaware Grocery, Delaware Grocery also responsibly maintains general commercial liability insurance and property insurance.
- (7) In addition to Delaware Grocery being a valued member of the community, which is welcomed and respected by the members in the neighborhood for providing a vital grocery service to the residents, Delaware Grocery is also a respected business and valued trade partner by its trusted business vendors of the Capital District. Copies of letters in support of Delaware Grocery, executed by Delaware Grocery's trade partners: (1) Michael Richards, of Wustefeld Candy Co. Inc., headquartered in Green Island, New York; (2) Jeff LaPorte (Troy), of Harold Levinson Associates, headquartered in Farmingdale, New York; and (3) Joe Dzembo, of Dzembo's Dairy Inc., headquartered in Watervliet, New York, are attached hereto as **Exhibit "F"**.

The Nuisance Complaint on its face fails to sufficiently allege a general nuisance or describe how the property at 36 Judson Street is used, operated, or maintained in such a manner so as to be free of nuisances, as defined in state law. Despite their continued coordination with the Albany City Police Department, and consistent voluntary production of security camera footage and other helpful information, it is not the duty of Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street to act as community policing agents with regard to violence that occurs in the West Hill Neighborhood. Delaware Grocery, its owner, and its operators are hardworking Americans, pursuing the American Dream, the best way they know how. Now, with this Nuisance Complaint they face the risk of an unjustified and likely unconstitutional shut down of the business, through no fault of their own, and for the mere reason of their existence. The Albany City Board of Zoning Appeals should dismiss the Nuisance Complaint as insufficient on its face and unsupported in its claims that Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street is a general nuisance or hazard to the health, safety, welfare of uses or structures within 200 feet of 36 Judson Street.

We look forward to a further opportunity to be heard tonight at tonight's hearing of the Board of Zoning Appeals at 6:00PM. Should the Board have any questions or concerns, we look forward to doing the best we can to provide additional information and responses to such.

Very Truly Yours,

Date: February 26, 2020

Albany, New York

COOPER ERVING & SAVAGE LLP

By: David C. Rowley, Esq.

Brett D. French, Esq.

Attorneys for Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street, Albany, NY 12206 39 North Pearl Street, 4th Floor

39 North Pearl Street, 4th Floor Albany, New York 12207

(518) 449-3900

	ALLEGED		
2/7/2019 Officer Zielman	DG	Get A Compliant	Arived 09:16:17 Cleared 09:16:17
3/6/2019 Dispatch	DG G	Person Annoying-black male refusing to leave store and harassing customers	Arrived 22:41 Cleared 22:45
3/15/2019 Dispatch	DG	Group Annoying-Large group refusing to leave	
3/15/2019 Dispatch	DG	Group Annoying- large group in front getting ready to fight	Arrived 22:14 Cleared 22:18
3/19/2019 Detective Scalise	DG	Person Annoying- black male harassing store customers	
3/30/2019 Last Name- Detective	DG	Group Annoying- 15-20 ppl intoxicated refusing to leave	_
4/21/2019 No Name Recorded	DG	Group Annoying- group of males selling drugs	
5/6/2019 No Name Recorded	DG	Fight- Large Fight	Arrived 22:07 Cleared 22:09
5/11/2019 Detective Scalise	DG	Trouble w/ Customer- 10-12 ppl refusing to leave	Arrived 23:25 Cleared 23:40
1/3/2018 Officer Deluca	DG	Property Check	Arrived & Cleared 17:15
1/4/2018 Officer Deluca	DG	Property Check	Arrived & Cleared 15:59
1/11/2018 Officer Deluca	DG.	Property Check	Arrived 16:49 Cleared 17:01
1/14/2018 Mohammed#518-462-0866	DG	Person Annoying-male outside refusing to leave & yelling over \$10	Arrived 06:42 Cleared 06:56
1/16/2018 No Name Rec #518-462-0866	DG	Check a Subject- white male loitering outside	Arrived 18:29 Cleared 20:54 Male Detained
2/4/2018 Abdul	DG	Get a Complaint- customer received wrong change/language barrier	
2/15/2018 Officer Mascaro	DG	Check a Subject- no remarks recorded	Arrived 22:53 Cleared 23:11
3/19/2018 Officer DiCarlo	DG	Follow up on Prev. Call- no remarks recorded	
4/5/2018 Officer Deluca	DG	Property Check	
4/7/2018 No Name Recorded	DG	Group Annoying- group 15-20 being loud & drinking	Arrived 22:13 Cleared 22:16
4/7/2018 Abdul Nagi- #518-462-0866	DG	Person w/ Weapon- white male in front of store w/ 2x4	Arrived 22:46 Cleared 23:33
4/7/2018 Abdul Nagi- #518-462-0866	DG	Sick Person- white male in front of store w/ 2x4	Arrived 23:01 Returned 23:11
4/8/2018 Officer Deluca	DG	Property Check	Arrived & Cleared 17:26
4/12/2018 Officer Riboul	DG.	Check a Subject- Female	Arrived 22:18 Cleared 22:33
4/22/2018 Officer Deluca	DG	Property Check	Arrived & Cleard 16:25
4/24/2018 No Name Recorded	300	Group Annoying- no remains recorded	Arrived & Cleared 16:01
4/24/2018 Officer Deluca	76	Property Check	Arrived & Cleard 17:04
5/2/2018 No Name Rec = #518-462-0866	DG	Fight- group fighting	Call canceled by Operator
5/2/2018 No Name Rec. #518-462-0866	DG	Person Annoying- states someone send help	Arrived 18:47 Cleared 18:57
5/23/2018 Officer Riboul	DG	Auto Accident- Property Damage	Arrived 20:41 Cleared 21:29
5/29/2018 Officer Riboul	DG	Vehicle in Violation	Arrived 18:29 Cleared 18:40
5/29/2018 Officer Riboul	ል	Vehicle in Violation	Arrived 17:53 Cleared 18:01
5/31/2018 USA Central-#800-422-2300	DG	Burgalar Alarm- rear motion detector	Cleared 03:22
6/4/2018 USA Central-#800-422-2300	DG	Burgalar Alarm- front door and motion	Arrived & Cleared 21:50
6/4/2018 Officer Durkin	DG	Warrant- in & secure	Arrived 19:42 Cleared 20:14
6/17/2018 Officer Deluca	DG	Property Check	Arrived & Cleared 15:20
6/23/2018 Officer Deluca	DG.	Property Check	Arrived & Cleared 16:09
6/23/2018 SGT Deluca	DG	Detail	Cleared 20:01
6/26/2018 SGT Deluca	DG	Detail	Cleared 21:07
7/3/2018 Officer Deluca	DG	Property Check	Arrived & Cleared 15:26
7/10/2018 SGT Deluca	DG	Detail	Arrived & Cleared 18:34
7/26/2018 Officer Deluca	DG	Property Check	Arrived 18:27 Cleared 18:28
7/27/2018 Officer Deluca	DG	Property Check	Arrived & Cleared 16:53
8/23/2018 Eargham- #518-496-9998	DG	tomer- clerk calling male inside	Arrived 18:10 Cleared 18:15
	3	Larceny just occurred-black male took beer, escaped back first st & lexington	Autical 16:06 Planed 16:60
9/11/2018 Abduh- #518-462-0866	DG	ave	Arnyed 15:26 Cleared 15:58

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Arrived & Cleared 21:34	Get Report- Nagi, Abdo		
	Check a Subject- large group hanging out in front	DG	7/14/2017 No Name Rec.
	Property Check	DG	7/7/2017 Officer Deluca
of delivery truck Arrived 07:08 Cleared 08:12	Larceny just Occurred- cigarettes were taken from back of delivery truck	DG	7/6/2017 No Name Rec. #518-928-4395
noney taken from Arrived 04:33 Cleared 05:50	Robbery- unsure when larceny occurred was upstairs, money taken from register	DG	7/2/2017 Sabih-#518-462-0866
Arrived 09:55 Cleared 10:09	Follow up on Prev. Call- no remarks recorded	DG	12/21/2018 Officer DiCarlo
Arrived 17:32 Cleared 18:11	Follow up on Prev. Call- no remarks recorded	DG	12/21/2018 Officer DiCarlo
Агтived 12:55 Cleared 13:32	Other	DG	12/12/2018 Officer DiCarlo
1 .	caller 330-0173 refused name- CPR in progress	DG	12/10/2018 Mr.Grand-#518-727-9883
Female	Male shot in chest-location of assailant unknown serious bleeding		12/10/2016 Stand N-#310-/2/->003
chi blanding Arrived 19:57 Cleared 72:57	Shooting, male shot in chest assailant unknown serious	DG 4	12/10/2018 Hang Up-#218-727 0883
Can cancered by Operator	No Kemark Recorded	3 2	12/8/2018 No Name Rec.#518-462-0866
Arrived 14:22 Cleared 14:27	Trouble w/ Customer- black male refusing to leave	200	12/8/2018 Addy Abdul-#518-462-0866
le beer ist	Trouble w/ Customer- customers trying to fight, 3 male 1 female, sto Street	DG	12/5/2018 Hang Up-#518-462-0866
Arrived 19:10 Cleared 19:33	Check a Subject- no remarks recorded	DG	12/3/2018 Officer DiCarlo
	hand	DG	11/30/2018 Clerk-#518-462-0866
cut customer in store on	Hemmorrhage & Laceration- black male has hand gun, cut customer		A PROCESS OF STATE OF
pocket, WB on second,	Person w/ Weapon- black male has hand gun in hoodie pocket, WB 1 in custody 346 Sec St., Isaiah Johnson DOB:09/15/80	DG G	11/30/2018 Clerk- #518-462-0866
	Group Annoying- group out front refusing to leave	DG	11/19/2018 Abdo Nagi- #518-462-0866
	Group Annoying- group inside not buying anything, need to be removed	DG	11/16/2018 Abdo Nagi- #518-462-0866
	Group Annoying- 10 ppl in front of store	DG	11/7/2018 Jelal- #518-462-0866
f store, need removed Arrived 20:44 Cleared 20:47	Group Annoying- 10 black males hanging out in front of store, need	DG G	10/12/2018 Abdul Nagi- #518-462-0866

A CONTRACTOR OF THE PARTY OF TH

12/20/2017 Officer Deluca DG Property Check	12/19/2017 Officer Deluca DG Property Check	12/17/2017 Officer Deluca DG Property Check	12/17/2017 Shakina Jackson-#347-962-7604 DG Westchester		12/14/2017 No Name Rec. #518-462-0866 DG Trouble w/ Customer- male trying to pay for hot card w/ food stamps- refusing	
Property Check Arrived 17:10 Cleared 17:11				a Subject- black male, caller is mother, male missing out of group home	Trouble w/ Customer- male trying to pay for hot card w/ food stamps- refusing Arrived 15:37 Cleared 16:01	

In the Matter of the Application of CHRISTOPHER SPENCER, Chief Planning Official for the City of Albany & JAHMEL ROBINSON, City of Albany Common Council Member for the Fifth Ward for an Order by City of Albany Board of Zoning Appeals Finding 36 JUDSON STREET to be a Nuisance.

AFFIDAVIT OF MUSTAFA NAGI IN OPPOSITION TO COMPLAINT OF NUISANCE AT 36 JUDSON STREET, ALBANY, NY

Index No.: 2019-502

STATE OF NEW YORK)
)
COUNTY OF ALBANY) ss.:

Mustafa Nagi, being duly sworn, deposes and says:

- 1. I am a resident of the City of Albany, New York, and am over the age of 18 years. I make this Affidavit in opposition to the Complaint of Nuisance at 36 Judson Street, Albany, New York 12206, to be filed with my attorneys' letter, and presented to the Albany City Board of Zoning Appeals prior to the public hearing to be held on February 26, 2020, at 6:00PM.
- 2. I, along with several of my family members, manage and operate the grocery store, Delaware Grocery, located at 36 Judson Street, Albany, New York 12206, and as such, I am intimately familiar with the allegations made in the December 12, 2019, Complaint of Nuisance at 36 Judson Street, Albany, New York (hereinafter referred to as "the Nuisance Complaint"), and the surrounding circumstances of Delaware Grocery's operation and the uses of the premises and property at 36 Judson Street. The source of my information and knowledge comes from personal knowledge, communications with my co-operators and employees, and lifetime experience as a member of the West Hill Neighborhood and Fifth Ward community.
- 3. The allegations contained within the Nuisance Complaint are false, and are denied in their entirety.

- 4. The Nuisance Complaint sets out to attempt to allege that Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street is somehow operated in a manner that causes and/or contributes to the property being a general nuisance, by arguing that within the last several years there have been several violent crimes committed near the general proximity of Delaware Grocery.
- 5. Furthermore, the Nuisance Complaint sets out to argue that in addition to the allegedly close general proximity of the violent crimes to Delaware Grocery, that the individuals involved in the violent crimes, whether the perpetrators or the victims, were, at one point in the past, customers of Delaware Grocery.
- 6. This characterization is unfair, and it is an oversimplification of the socioeconomic and geographic makeup of the West Hill Neighborhood and Fifth Ward, of which, within which, Delaware Grocery is a popular grocery store.
- 7. Delaware Grocery is a vital resource to the residents of the West Hill Neighborhood and Fifth Ward, and provides a grocery store services to many people who have nowhere else to turn for their grocery needs, or the ability to travel greater distances to perform their more simple grocery shopping.
- 8. This need, whether due to socioeconomic status, or some other reason, is met by very few other stores in the West Hill Neighborhood and Fifth Ward, which in turn causes the store to be frequented by many customers who often live within a very short walking distance or car ride.
- 9. At the same time, the West Hill Neighborhood and Fifth Ward unfortunately suffer from systemic problems of poverty and crime, none of which can be attributed to Delaware Grocery.

- 10. Delaware Grocery has all the elements of an urban grocery store, which include, but are not limited to, frequent visits by customers on a daily or even more frequent basis. Luckily we are within walking distance to many of our customers, and provide great service to our community.
- 11. Unfortunately, if you couple the two issues together, you get a situation where you have a neighborhood where violent crime and other activities associated with poverty occurs, in a geographic location where there is only a few public commercial places where people tend to visit outside of their own home to do their grocery shopping and other small-talk socialization.
- 12. The mere fact that violent crime occurs near one of the only grocery stores, which happens to be one of the only public commercial spaces in the neighborhood where people would frequent, does not make the store a general nuisance any more than it makes the City of Albany a general nuisance.
- 13. The Nuisance Complaint is false to claim that Ahmad Flemming, 33, was shot and killed outside of 36 Judson Street while patronizing Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson.
- 14. Mr. Ahmad Flemming was a resident of the West Hill Neighborhood, who shopped at Delaware Grocery. On the day Mr. Flemming was killed, hours earlier, Mr. Flemming had been shopping at Delaware Grocery. Hours after leaving Delaware Grocery, Mr. Flemming was shot and killed a block to two blocks away from the store.
- 15. The way the Nuisance Complaint is worded is disingenuous, as it is worded as if Mr. Flemming was shot and killed while he was walking out of the store with groceries in his hand, immediately after patronizing the store. This is not the case, and never has been the case.

- 16. The same set of circumstances as described above for the death of Mr. Flemming, apply to the death of Kenneth Love.
- 17. Mr. Kenneth Love was also a resident of the West Hill Neighborhood, who frequently shopped at Delaware Grocery. On the day Mr. Love was killed, hours earlier, Mr. Love had been shopping at Delaware Grocery. Hours after leaving Delaware Grocery, Mr. Love was shot and killed a block to two blocks away from the store.
- 18. The same set of circumstances as described above of Mr. Flemming and Mr. Love, apply to the death of Mr. Blount.
- 19. As for the Nuisance Complaint's allegations that on May 26, 2019, July 9, 2019, and August 25, 2019, shootings occurred outside of Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street, these allegations are also false and inaccurate.
- 20. Upon information and belief, there has never been a shooting that has taken place directly outside of Delaware Grocery at 36 Judson Street.
- 21. With regard to the Nuisance Complaint's allegations that on several occasions the Albany City Police Department were forced to break up large scale fights, again, upon information and belief, these fights and the people involved had nothing to do with Delaware Grocery, and involved members of the neighborhood. Oftentimes, Delware Grocery operators called Albany City Police to request assistance or report the crimes occurring.
- 22. On each occasion when asked by the City of Albany Police Department to help assist in an investigation by producing Delaware Grocery's private security camera footage, Delaware Grocery has done so without hesitation.
- 23. In addition to our efforts to cooperate with the City of Albany Police Department in the past, over the last few years, on the few occasions Delaware Grocery's operators,

including myself, have witnessed a dangerous situation or a possible crime occurring, we have

reached out to Albany City Police to request assistance.

We have called to attempt to prevent criminal conduct occurring near the vicinity 24.

of the grocery store, as well as to help prevent a crime such as a larceny or fight from occurring

in the store.

25. Ultimately any and all code violations during the history of the property were

resolved within a matter of days to weeks. There have never been any criminal allegations made

against Delaware Grocery or the owner and operators of the store, or any other regulatory

violations.

We have cooperated with the City of Albany on all requests in the past to attempt 26.

to alleviate any issues in the neighborhood in the past, including limiting hours of operation and

closing at earlier times.

At Delaware Grocery, we have always thought of ourselves as community leaders 27.

and partners with the City of Albany, seeking to achieve the American Dream through hard work

and providing a crucial service to our community, but now the City of Albany seeks to shut

down Delaware Grocery due to its own inability to prevent crime and curb poverty in the West

Hill Neighborhood.

Sworn to before me this 2 day of February, 2020

SUSAN M. BENAC Notary Public, State of New York No. 01BE4952362 Qualified in Schenectady County Commission Expires June 19, 2023

PETITION IN SUPPORT OF DELAWARE GROCERY

Located at 36 JUDSON STREET, ALBANY, NY 12206

The purpose of this Petition is to be presented to the City of Albany, New York, Department of Planning and Development, Board of Zoning Appeals, on or before February 26, 2020, in opposition to the Complaint of Nuisance, dated December 12, 2019, filed on behalf of Cristopher Spencer, Commissioner of Planning and Community Development and Chief Planning Official for the City of Albany, and Jahmel Robinson, City of Albany Common Council Member for the Fifth Ward for the City of Albany, and in support of Delaware Grocery's continued operation by Faisal and Mustafa Nagi, as Delaware Grocery is not a nuisance property, and poses no threat or danger to the health, safety or welfare of the West Hill neighborhood or Fifth Ward, or the City of Albany at large.

By signing this petition, the signatory agrees and attests to the above stated purposes of this Petition, and affirms the following facts regarding Delaware Grocery, located at 36 Judson Street, Albany, NY 12206:

- (1) I am a resident of the City of Albany, New York, and reside in the West Hill neighborhood and/or Fifth Ward;
- (2) Delaware Grocery, located at 36 Judson Street, Albany, NY 12206, is not a general nuisance or a nuisance property, nor does Delaware Grocery pose any threat or danger to the health, safety or welfare of the West Hill neighborhood or Fifth Ward, or the City of Albany at large;
- (3) I support Delaware Grocery, and its continued operation by Faisal and Mustafa Nagi;
- (4) I oppose the Complaint of Nuisance, dated December 12, 2019, filed on behalf of Cristopher Spencer, Commissioner of Planning and Community Development and Chief Planning Official for the City of Albany, and Jahmel Robinson, City of Albany Common Council Member for the Fifth Ward for the City of Albany;
- (5) I do not believe that Delaware Grocery, or its operators, Faisal and Mustafa Nagi, cause, or have any connection or nexus to the violent and criminal activities that have allegedly taken place in or near, or in any proximity of Delaware Grocery, Judson Street, or Second Avenue;
- (6) I believe Delaware Grocery, and its operators, to be essential members of the West Hill neighborhood and Fifth Ward, as well as the City of Albany at large, as they provide essential grocery services to the area, that are essential to the families and residents of the area, and they are upstanding members of the community;
- (7) I have never witnessed Delaware Grocery to have operated in a manner that poses a threat to the health, safety and or welfare of the residents of the West Hill neighborhood or Fifth Ward.

- (8) I recommend that the Complaint of Nuisance, dated December 12, 2019, be dismissed.
- (9) I have read this Petition and agree with the contents hereof.

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PETITION IN SUPPORT OF DELAWARE GROCERY

12 22 27 27 1

Located at 36 JUDSON STREET, ALBANY, NY 12206

The purpose of this Petition is to be presented to the City of Albany, New York, Department of Planning and Development, Board of Zoning Appeals, on or before February 26, 2020, in opposition to the Complaint of Nuisance, dated December 12, 2019, filed on behalf of Cristopher Spencer, Commissioner of Planning and Community Development and Chief Planning Official for the City of Albany, and Jahmel Robinson, City of Albany Common Council Member for the Fifth Ward for the City of Albany, and in support of Delaware Grocery's continued operation by Faisal and Mustafa Nagi, as Delaware Grocery is not a nuisance property, and poses no threat or danger to the health, safety or welfare of the West Hill neighborhood or Fifth Ward, or the City of Albany at large.

By signing this petition, the signatory agrees and attests to the above stated purposes of this Petition, and affirms the following facts regarding Delaware Grocery, located at 36 Judson Street, Albany, NY 12206:

- (1) I am a resident of the City of Albany, New York, and reside in the West Hill neighborhood and/or Fifth Ward;
- (2) Delaware Grocery, located at 36 Judson Street, Albany, NY 12206, is not a general nuisance or a nuisance property, nor does Delaware Grocery pose any threat or danger to the health, safety or welfare of the West Hill neighborhood or Fifth Ward, or the City of Albany at large;
- (3) I support Delaware Grocery, and its continued operation by Faisal and Mustafa Nagi;
- (4) I oppose the Complaint of Nuisance, dated December 12, 2019, filed on behalf of Cristopher Spencer, Commissioner of Planning and Community Development and Chief Planning Official for the City of Albany, and Jahmel Robinson, City of Albany Common Council Member for the Fifth Ward for the City of Albany;
- (5) I do not believe that Delaware Grocery, or its operators, Faisal and Mustafa Nagi, cause, or have any connection or nexus to the violent and criminal activities that have allegedly taken place in or near, or in any proximity of Delaware Grocery, Judson Street, or Second Avenue;
- (6) I believe Delaware Grocery, and its operators, to be essential members of the West Hill neighborhood and Fifth Ward, as well as the City of Albany at large, as they provide essential grocery services to the area, that are essential to the families and residents of the area, and they are upstanding members of the community;
- (7) I have never witnessed Delaware Grocery to have operated in a manner that poses a threat to the health, safety and or welfare of the residents of the West Hill neighborhood or Fifth Ward.

- (8) I recommend that the Complaint of Nuisance, dated December 12, 2019, be dismissed.
- (9) I have read this Petition and agree with the contents hereof.

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Case Type:

Code Enforcement

Project:

Opened Date:

11/15/2019

Status:

Closed

Main

District:

Albany

Closed Date:

12/23/2019

Assigned To:

Joshua Gold

Description:

Parcel: 65.55-6-32

Address: 36 Judson St

Albany, NY

36 Judson St. -- nuisance property

Main

Owner

Abdo M Nagi

36 Judson St Albany, Ny 12206

Violation Code: NYS PMC 304.13

Violation Status: In Compliance

Citation Issue Date: 11/18/2019

Code Description: Window, Skylight and Door Frames

Compliance Date: Resolved Date:

12/23/2019 12/23/2019

Corrective Action: Side boarded up window needs to be replaced with a new window.

Make sure to obtain all necessary permits.

Violation Code: NYS PMC 304.5

Violation Status: In Compliance

Citation Issue Date:

11/18/2019

Code Description: Foundation Walls

Violation Status: In Compliance

Compliance Date: Resolved Date:

12/23/2019 12/23/2019

Corrective Action:

Side foundation needs to be properly repaired.

Violation Code: NYS PMC 302.7

Citation Issue Date:

11/18/2019

Code Description:

Ext Property Areas, Accessory Structures

Compliance Date: Resolved Date:

12/23/2019 12/23/2019

Corrective Action:

Fence on the side of the property needs to be properly repaired and replaced.

Make sure to obtain all necessary permits:

Citation Issue Date:

11/18/2019

Violation Code: NYS PMC 605.1

Violation Code: NYS PMC 308.1

Violation Status: In Compliance

Violation Status: In Compliance

Compliance Date:

12/23/2019

Code Description: Electrical Equipment, Installation

Resolved Date:

12/23/2019

Corrective Action: Open electrical boxes on the side of the building need to be properly secured.

Citation Issue Date:

11/18/2019

Code Description: Accumulation of Rubbish & Garbage

Compliance Date:

12/23/2019

Resolved Date:

12/23/2019

Corrective Action: Pallets in the rear of the property need to be removed and cleaned up.

Inspection Number

Inspection Type

Inspection Status

Inspection Date

INSP19-036755

Inspector: Joshua Gold

Code Site Inspection

In Violation

11/18/2019 5:31 am

Checklist Comments:

INSP19-036827

Code Site Inspection

In Compliance

12/23/2019 12:52 pm

Inspector: Ryan Rusiecki **Checklist Comments:**





111 Paine Street • Green Island, NY 12183

518-272-5600

FAX 518-272-5690

Mon, Feb 17, 2020

To whom it may concern;

Hello, my name is Michael Richards, I am a salesman from Wustefeld Candy Company. We have been doing business with Abdo Nagi of Deleware Grocery located at 36 Judson street in Albany NY, since August 21 1995.

Delaware Grocery has always been an excellent Customer to our Wustefeld family. We deliver to them twice a week and they have always paid in the agreed upon terms without fail every time month after month year after year. Abdo the owner and his employees are nothing short of a pleasure to do business with. If you find you have comments or questions please do not hesitate to call me or speak to anyone at our Wustefeld family at 518 272-5600.

Sincerely,

Michael Richards

Wustefeld Candy Co.

Jeff LaPorte

29 Plank rd

Troy NY. 12182

Regards to;

Deleware Grocery

36 Judson st Albany

To who it may concern,

I have done business with the owners of Deleware grocery for approximately 25 years now. They have always been honest, decent, and good people. They have always paid their bills, owing me \$5,000 TO \$6,000 at a time. They have a nice neat clean store. The people in the neighborhood respect them, and never hassle me. This neighborhood was a lot worse years ago. They provide a needed service to the community, and have no impact on any events that occur in it.

Sincerely, Jeff LaPorte

Dzembis Dairy 16 Homen it may concern Deleware Grocery been a Contopas of mind Joz over 20 years and Dervice with mill sutter Eggs chesse Dyessing we and other had Grobers with him and a Don't howe well that deeple want to close his store the problem in outside of the store. Thank