

CITY OF ALBANY  
BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

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In the Matter of the Application of  
BRADLEY GLASS, Chief  
Planning Official for the City of Albany &  
RICHARD CONTI, City of Albany  
Common Council Member for the Sixth  
Ward for an Order by City of Albany  
Board of Zoning Appeals Finding  
275 LARK STREET to Be a Nuisance.

**COMPLAINT OF NUISANCE AT  
275 LARK STREET, ALBANY,  
NY**

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

BRADLEY GLASS, Director of Planning and Development and Chief Planning Official for the City of Albany and RICHARD CONTI, City of Albany Common Council Member for the Sixth Ward for the City of Albany as and for a complaint pursuant to Albany City Code §375-507(5)(a)(i) that 275 Lark Street is a nuisance property state and allege as follows:

1. It is our conclusion, based on consideration of City of Albany police records and news reports of violent incidents, that 275 Lark Street is a 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 Center Square, Hudson Park, Park South, and Washington Park Neighborhoods.
2. The nuisance at 275 Lark Street has resulted in serious violent incidents in its vicinity in the last year and half, most recently on July 23, 2021, along with a continuous and unbroken pattern of incidents which have escalated in seriousness and have negatively impacted the safety and livability of the Center Square, Hudson Park, Park South, and Washington Park Neighborhoods since 2019.

3. 275 Lark Street is located in the City of Albany's Sixth Ward and City of Albany Common Council Member Richard Conti is the City of Albany Common Council Member representing that ward.
4. 275 Lark Street is a commercial structure that is located in a mixed-use, neighborhood center zoning district and is home to a tavern called Café Hollywood.
5. Café Hollywood operates as a tavern, providing food and beverage service to its patrons, and is classified as a nightclub by the City of Albany Assessor's Office.
6. 275 Lark Street is situated on Lark Street, between Madison and Hudson Avenues, parallel to Willett Street, in a densely populated section of the Center Square, Hudson Park, Park South, and Washington Park Neighborhoods, located in the Sixth Ward.
7. According to the 2010 U.S. Census, the total population of the Sixth Ward is 6,476 residents.
8. Over the past year and a half, incidents in the vicinity of 275 Lark Street involving patrons of Café Hollywood have grown increasingly violent despite the City of Albany Police Department's best efforts to control and calm the situation there.
9. Notwithstanding this, the situation at 275 Lark Street has only grown worse, and there has been an uptick in violent and dangerous incidents in the past six months, in particular.
10. Between November 25, 2019, and July 23, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department has responded to 120 service calls concerning the location of 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood.
11. Further, 45 of those service calls occurred between January 11, 2021, and July 23, 2021, and such calls reflect an increase of violence and danger present at the location of 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood.

12. On November 30, 2019, the City of Albany Police Department responded to two service calls at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for reports of a fight and a stabbing with multiple wounds.
13. On January 4, 2020, the City of Albany Police Department responded to one service call at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for a report of a fight.
14. On January 28, 2020, the City of Albany Police Department responded to one service call at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for a report of a fight.
15. On February 9, 2020, the City of Albany Police Department responded to one service call at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for a report of a person with a weapon.
16. On January 11, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department responded to one service call at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for a report of a traumatic injury.
17. On February 26, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department responded to one service call at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for a report of a fight.
18. On April 2, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department responded to one service call at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for a report of an emotionally disturbed person.
19. On April 25, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department responded to three service calls at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for reports of three fights.
20. On May 14, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department responded to two service calls at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for reports of a fight and traffic or other hazard at the location.
21. On June 5, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department responded to two service calls at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for reports, including a report of an assault involving a machete.

22. Early in the morning on Saturday, June 5, 2021, a 36-year-old male was taken to Albany Medical Center with a laceration to his lower leg after he was assaulted with a machete on Lark Street outside of 275 Lark Street after he and the assailant had been patronizing Café Hollywood at 275 Lark Street.
23. The machete attack on June 5, 2021, began as a confrontation inside of Café Hollywood at 275 Lark Street between the 36-year-old victim and two other individuals that escalated and continued into Lark Street after Hollywood Café staff failed to properly deescalate the altercation or contact the appropriate authorities.
24. On June 20, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department responded to one service call at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for a report of a fight.
25. On July 4, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department responded to three service calls at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for reports of a person with a weapon, fireworks, and a vehicle in violation at the location.
26. On July 23, 2021, the City of Albany Police Department responded to three service calls at 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood for reports of a person with a weapon, a property check, and detail.
27. Further, on Friday, July 23, 2021, at about one in the morning, a 34-year-old male sustained a gunshot wound in the head and later died, while in the area of Willett Street and Hudson Avenue, in the vicinity of 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood.
28. In an ongoing investigation into the July 23, 2021, shooting undertaken by New York State and City of Albany authorities, local law enforcement, at the time of this filing, believes that an argument that stemmed from inside of Café Hollywood at 275 Lark Street resulted

in the subsequent shooting of the 34-year-old victim that occurred in the nearby area of Willett Street and Hudson Avenue.

29. An altercation that started inside of Café Hollywood at 275 Lark Street, in turn, was allowed to continue into the street and surrounding neighborhood, and, ultimately, resulted in the shooting and death of the 34-year-old victim at the nearby area of Willett Street and Hudson Avenue.

30. The 34-year-old victim who sustained a gunshot wound on July 23, 2021, was pronounced deceased on Saturday, July 24, 2021.

31. What is described above is likely only a portion of the troubling incidents which have continued to crystallize around Café Hollywood and 275 Lark Street.


32. Over the past year and a half, and in particular, the past six months, 275 Lark Street and Café Hollywood has become a hub of intractable violence and it is only a matter of time before this unacceptable trend results in further injury, crime, fear, and death.

33. It is critical that 275 Lark Street is addressed as quickly as possible to prevent further violence and bloodshed there and to remove this crippling nuisance to the Center Square, Hudson Park, Park South, and Washington Park Neighborhoods.

**WHEREFORE**, we respectfully request that the City of Albany Board of Zoning Appeals schedule a public hearing pursuant to Albany City Code 375-507(5)(a) for the purpose of determining whether 275 Lark Street is a nuisance property, in conjunction with the Mayor's Emergency Declaration issued on July 23, 2021, providing for the temporary suspension of the operation of the establishment known as Café Hollywood for a period of 30 days, and upon such a finding by the Board of Zoning Appeals that 275 Lark Street is in fact a nuisance, an order terminating the use of the building for two years.

Dated: July 28, 2021  
Albany, New York

Respectfully submitted,

By:   
Bradley Glass  
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT  
CITY OF ALBANY

By: Richard Conti  
Richard Conti  
CITY OF ALBANY COMMON COUNCIL  
MEMBER FOR THE SIXTH WARD