



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Tony Avella

## Senator Avella and Homeowners Call on City to Take Action on Fire-Hazard Vehicles Left at Abandoned Home

ANDREI VASILESCU July 5, 2016



**Queens, NY** – Today, State Senator Tony Avella stood with community residents plagued by an abandoned home, calling on the City to take action by removing the two derelict vehicles on the property. Both vehicles are filled with hoarded newspapers, creating a serious fire-hazard that becomes more likely to kindle as the summer heat intensifies.

Avella first became involved with this property in the summer of 2015 after a neighbor of the abandoned home, Azmina Esmail, requested his assistance. It was revealed that the original

property owner passed away over a decade ago, and her son's whereabouts are unknown. Legal notifications had been mounting in the mail box, and, because it is a private property with no mortgage, the home had been left to become dilapidated, overgrown, infested with raccoons, sanctuary for trespassing teenagers allegedly distributing drugs, and accumulating debris.

Avella held a press conference and subsequently spoke to several agencies concerning the home. He arranged an on-site inspection with the Department of Sanitation (DOS), the Department of Buildings (DOB), the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) and the Fire Department of New York (FDNY). The property was cleaned and sealed, however, just about all of the aforementioned conditions persist.

After it became clear that the circular conversations with the agencies were only yielding the same ineffective actions, violation letters sent to a late owner, never to be read, Avella called on the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) in March to demolish the building. HPD responded in May and said the property owner's death is not sufficient cause to warrant a demolition. The outstanding taxes on the property have been sold to a servicing company, but it takes years before the home will even enter into the foreclosure process.

"This property is a pox on the community and people are completely justified in feeling frustrated with the City's inaction. The dilapidated home drops property values, it is unsanitary, and the derelict vehicles are a fire disaster waiting to happen. The property owner has been long deceased. Repeatedly addressing Notices of Violations won't do anything other than give reading material for the raccoons infesting the property. Madness is doing the same thing over and over, yet expecting a different result. It's time for the City to stop going in circles, bypass the normal waiver process, and, at the very least, remove the two abandoned cars filled with newspapers before a fire starts to spread," **said State Senator Tony Avella.**