

Law Office of Kirk Anderson LLC

October 22, 2018

Community Develop Division
30 S. Nevada Ave., Suite 604
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

RE: Mill Street Neighborhood Plan/Springs Rescue Mission

Ms. Duarte or City Council Members,

My name is Kirk Anderson. I'm an attorney that rents an office located at 1009 S. Tejon St. and I am also part owner of 1031 S. Tejon St. Both locations are within the Mill Street Neighborhood and a short distance from the Springs Rescue Mission.

I'd like to share with you how my day started today. At 8:25 a.m., I pulled into my office parking lot which is off the alley between Tejon & Nevada and between Mill St. and Las Vegas St. There was a man by a dumpster and his expensive-looking mountain bike was blocking my entry into my parking lot. He was likely homeless as his clothes were dirty and ragged. I doubt he paid for the mountain bike and its numerous accessories designed for trail-riding. I rolled down my window to ask the man to move his bike so I could pull in my gated parking lot. Well, he had a problem complying because he had a needle in his arm. Panicked, he let go of the needle and gingerly held his arm out with the needle sticking out, which allowed him to use his one free arm to move the bicycle out of my way. Shooting up in plain-sight at 8:30 in the morning. This is not atypical, but a common occurrence in this area.

At my property at 1031 S. Tejon, I have had to power-wash feces more than I'd like to remember. The contents of my trashcan dumped on the property so that a homeless person could use it as a laundry bucket (the clothes were on my fence air-drying). I've had to kick out homeless people who tried to fight me, forcing me to call 911. The results? One was a red-bearded man in all camouflage that came at me when I moved his backpack off my property. The responding police officer told me that this homeless man was well-known and to watch out for him throwing rocks at my property. Why was he on my property? Because he was waiting until Springs Rescue Mission would let him in.

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Once, a mother and her adult son broke in and moved their “luggage” into the property at 1031. I pressed charges for trespassing. The cop got my name and witness information. You know what happened? Nothing.

Frankly, I am fed up. The number one issue in this neighborhood is the homeless and the drugs and crime associated with the comings and goings to Springs Rescue Mission. They destroy property regularly.

The dumpster behind my building has a stolen Hoff & Leigh property sign which is used in conjunction with dumpster lids and a staircase to make a safe-haven for drugs and those kicked out of the homeless shelter. Homeless use it to shoot-up and to smoke what I assume is meth, judging by their complexion and lack of teeth.

I’ve spoken to Springs Rescue Mission who completely absolve themselves of any responsibility. Their official position is “if it’s not on our property, it’s not our problem.” They have no accountability and I am tempted to bring a nuisance claim against them. But Springs Rescue Mission is what attracts the homeless to the Mill Street Neighborhood. I’ve been here for five years, and every time Springs Rescue Mission expands, more homeless people loiter in the area as they wait to check-in or just checked-out. Drove of them jaywalking at Tejon and Las Vegas. Is jaywalking a serious crime? No. But do you know how often they are almost hit by cars? Two have been hit at Nevada & Las Vegas. I believe 3 have been struck by trains in the past year. All in the Mill Street Neighborhood.

One week ago, as I sat in my office working, someone started screaming and pounding on my window. I rushed outside. It was a homeless man high on something. In the few seconds it took me to get outside, he had managed to become tangled and upside-down in the piping for my utility meter. I pulled him out and told him to leave. He dropped his backpack and wanted to fight, arms outstretched yelling “lets go” and, to my amazement at his lack of awareness or care, he walked backwards into traffic without breaking eye contact. He ended up in the middle of Tejon Street by walking backwards without looking. After he came to his senses a little more, he walked northward up Tejon stopping at each reflection of himself in car windows and office windows where he would stop and start screaming at the reflection of his own face.

The homeless and drug-addicts simply **DO NOT CARE**. What angers me even more is that Springs Rescue Mission **DOES NOT CARE**, so long as they are getting donations for charity and support from our government officials. I wrote a letter to you asking you to not

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approve the recent expansion of Springs Rescue Mission because they do not take responsibility for the homeless they already “help.” But you did not listen. Of the \$6,000,000.00 expansion, \$3,000,000.00 came from a Community Development Block Grant.

Millions of dollars going to Springs Rescue Mission under the guise that it is a beneficial charity, while the homeless simultaneously destroy Mill Street Neighborhood. Tell me again, how much money is dedicated to improving Mill Street? Is it \$3,000,000.00?

I am tired of Springs Rescue Mission getting praise, credit, and vast resources or tax breaks from our local government while the residents and small businesses of the Mill Street Neighborhood get treated like the diaper of Colorado Springs because, well, “it’s where shit happens.”

Your favoritism for a negligently handled charity has forced residents and small businesses of Mill Street Neighborhood to unwillingly pay their safety, cleanliness, and dignity as forced charity contributions to a charity not of their own choosing.

Some of the worst things are done with great intentions. Springs Rescue Mission intends to help homeless, and that’s great. They need help. But they also promised to be responsible about it and not depreciate the neighborhood. They have failed.

What losses and costs are acceptable to this city in the name of charity? Why will you not hold Springs Rescue Mission accountable for bringing droves of homeless to Tejon and Las Vegas Street twice a day. This “catch and release” of homeless essentially equates to waves of drug use and property destruction. Twice a day. Like the tides. Mill Street Neighborhood has tides of crime, twice a day. What will you do?

This Mill Street Neighborhood Plan is quaint, but it is not enough. It is not sufficient compensation for the abundance of trash, drugs, and reckless homeless that plague the neighborhood twice a day. It is a mere band-aid on a gangrenous gash caused in the name of charity.

Do more. Hold Springs Rescue Mission responsible. Get more police presence during the times homeless are pushed back out of Springs Rescue Mission and when they start congregating to get in to Springs Rescue Mission. Did you know they are not allowed to take paraphernalia in or out of Springs Rescue? They slam booze (discarded bottles

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everywhere), stash drugs, take the last hit in the afternoon or rush to do one in the morning after a long night. Make a pedestrian bridge before a jaywalker gets killed (again). <=

THIS is Mill Street reality.

Do something substantial to fix it.

Sincerely,



Attorney, Kirk Anderson

10/22/18

Date

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