

## PROBLEM SOLVING AT 30TH AND FRANKLIN

On the southwest corner of 30th and Franklin Avenue are four residences including 420 and 422 South 30th Street, and 2995 and 2999 Franklin Avenue, both two-story duplexes. The two duplexes are joined by a common yard and a small patio sits behind 420 and 422 South 30th.

Early in 1988, Patrol Officers Swanger and Ammon assisted with the eviction of a tenant who lived a block away from Franklin Avenue. The owner of that property informed the officers of drug activity occurring at the corner of 30th and Franklin Avenue. When the officers went to the corner to investigate they found dozens of people selling and using drugs on the property.

With the assistance of other patrol officers, Swanger and Ammon began to apply selective enforcement to 30th and Franklin, resulting in over 100 arrests during April and May, and the execution of a search warrant at 420 South 30th Street by the Narcotics Street Team. Initially, this address appeared to be the focal point of drug activity, but when the tenant, Maddie King (55 years old), was arrested and jailed, the activity increased. Field interrogation and arrests revealed that relatives, friends, and transients inhabited the 420 duplex using it as a haven for selling and using illegal drugs. During July officers made over 100 narcotics arrests from the property surrounding both structures.

During a records check in July, Officer Swanger located the 80 year old property owner, Mr. Watkins, who lived in Perris, about 85 miles north of San Diego. Swanger called and left a message with Mrs. Watkins explaining what problems were occurring and suggesting that the owners visit the site.

The Watkins did not respond for three weeks, but during that time other officers contacted the City Zoning and Building Inspection Departments and arranged for inspectors to look at the property. The day after the inspection occurred, Mr. Watkins drove to San Diego to meet with Swanger and Ammon, Watkins showed them the 30 day eviction notices that he had served the tenants

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of 420 S. 30th and 2995 Franklin Avenue, and said that he had been "chased" off the property.

Three days later, four uniformed officers accompanied Swanger, Ammon and Mr. Watkins to the property. Maddie King residing at 420 S. 30th said she needed a few more days to move. Juanita Freelan at 2995 Franklin was reported to be avoiding Watkins, but was finally contacted a week after she was served with the eviction notice. She told Watkins that Section 8 (a federally subsidized housing program) had extended her rental agreement for a week. When the officers visited the Housing Commission's Section 8 office they were told that Section 8 could not assist in evicting the tenants. Two weeks after Maddie King was served, Watkins and the officers talked her into moving and the residence was boarded. Watkins asked Swanger and Ammon to accompany him to the Marshall's Office, where the supervisor informed them that Watkins had to sue Freelan to get her out of the residence and the process could take from 60-90 days. The supervisor gave them the necessary paperwork to include summons, petitions and other legal documents. Upon reading the documents it became clear to the officers and Mr. Watkins that legal counsel would be required to continue the eviction process.

Meanwhile, drug activity increased on the property, as Freelan did not leave and the residents of 420 S. 30th moved into 422 S. 30th where other crimes such as burglaries and purse snatching began to occur. Swanger and Ammon did not want to abate the property as the owner had been very cooperative, even driving 85 miles one way on a daily basis in an effort to evict the problem tenants.

In September, Officers Swanger, Ammon and their sergeant arranged a meeting with two supervisors from the Section 8 division of the Housing Commission, and the Special Assistant to the City Councilman representing the Franklin area. During an exchange of information, the officers discovered that the Section 8 program policies are directed toward the property owners with the

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Lawrence evicted. Swanger personally took copies of Lawrence's arrest report to the City Attorney's Office. Swanger met with the Issuing City Attorney to have Lawrence's court dates expedited. The City Attorney assured the officer that she would help him as much as she could in getting Lawrence out of the property. The officers also convinced Watkins not to move any new tenants into 420 S. 30th or 2995 Franklin until Lawrence had been evicted.

Public, private, and community resource people received POP training during the progression of events at 30th and Franklin. The media became involved when an editor from the San Diego Tribune, who completed POP training asked for a specific example of problem oriented policing by San Diego police officers. Joe Holley, the editor subsequently wrote two articles on the problems that Swanger and Ammon faced while trying to eliminate neighboring narcotics problems using the criminal justice system.

On November 29, 1988, five days before he was to be physically removed from the property by County Marshalls, Lawrence moved out. Juanita Freelan found a new home in the area of 800 West Street. She also continued to receive federal subsidies at this new location because she had not violated the terms of her Section 8 agreement while she resided at 2995 Franklin.

During the process of the tenant evictions, monthly meetings between Housing Commission representatives and officers from the San Diego Police Department were initiated. The officers learned that the Housing Commission staff was equally frustrated with a system that permitted subsidization of housing benefits for criminals. Together the two agencies formed strategies for legally attacking the problem using existing regulations. The Housing Commission also drafted a letter to the regional officer, of HUD recommending specific changes in the laws that govern the certification of Section 8 recipients. The Commission instituted a vigorous training policy to inform landlords of their areas of responsibility in tenant selection and maintaining control of their properties. The Police Department trained the Commission's

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staff, from inspectors to administrators, to identify drug problems in apartment complexes and in housing units. The Housing Commission provided training for police officers on the Commission's organizational structure, policies, and how police observations and documentation could assist the Commission in disqualifying tenants who engaged in illegal narcotic activity.

In January, 1989, Swanger received a narcotics complaint of drug activity at 844 West Street, the new residence of Juanita Freelan. Ammon met with the owners of this residence who were reluctant to evict the tenants without evidence that Freelan was dealing drugs. During a probation search of the residence, over three ounces of cocaine were found. Using interviews with people inside 844 West Street, Swanger documented the number of people living with Freelan. Armed with this information, the Housing Commission disqualified Freelan from the Section 8 program. When the owner of the property was notified that Freelan would no longer be receiving subsidies, he served Freelan with an eviction notice.