

Blood, Feces, Rats and a Restaurant? Londonderry Sues to Stop Slaughterhouse

Written by Avalon Lustick on December 29, 2017 1:32 pm.

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LONDONDERRY – The town has gone to court to try to stop a man from slaughtering animals on his property after years of complaints and violations.

On Dec. 14 the town filed an injunction in Rockingham County Superior Court in Brentwood to stop Julio Otero-Rivera of 26 Beacon St. from killing and processing animals for meat.

For years up to August 2011, neighbors have complained about the stench, treatment of the animals and traffic from Otero-Rivera's residential property.

Odors from the dead carcasses were so severe neighbors "could not keep their windows open or hang clean laundry outside," court documents state. Complaints also said the foot traffic is more like a commercial business than a residential property.

On Aug. 14, 2011, during a visit to the property, the town code enforcement officer witnessed the "the remains of disemboweled animals lying exposed on the ground near a puddle of blood from the freshly slain animal nearby one of the butchering tables," and animals running in their own feces and waste on the ground, and no evidence of running water for sanitation.

Otero-Rivera was issued a violation by the officer, citing state laws that included public nuisance (zoning ordinance), public nuisance (RSA), operating a slaughterhouse without local permission, unlawful food service establishment, and improper sanitation.

Neighbors said the problems didn't stop after the violation.

In 2013, Londonderry received more complaints of noise, parking, and the slaughtering of animals.

The code enforcement officer conducted an unannounced inspection of the property, and while conditions had improved since 2011, he witnessed up to 20 people on the property, exposed animal body parts out on a table, and people butchering an animal carcass.

Otero-Rivera's answers to the officer's questions were deemed sound and the town took no action.

In the spring of 2017, Londonderry again received complaints from neighbors saying Otero-Rivera was running a restaurant in addition to a slaughterhouse. State and federal inspectors visited the property a couple times in the following months.

The federal inspector told the town that the health of the animals seemed adequate although their living conditions were sub-par, that Otero-Rivera clarified that he sells live animals to customers and some even destined for slaughter and that he denied operating a restaurant, court documents state.

The federal inspector also reported to Londonderry that conditions of the property improved from his first visit in the spring to his second visit in June and, "animals sold to customers are brought by Mr. Rivera to a USDA inspected facility."

The state inspector reported the same.

"In general, it was very smelly, muddy and there were dead squirrels, rats and decaying birds observed," the state inspector said, according to court documents.

The inspector said Otero-Rivera does not run a food service but provides food for his family and friends only. Otero-Rivera stated he does not slaughter animals for consumers for pay, the court documents say.

In October, the town received more complaints.

The court document states that although the odor was not as severe as before, the number of rats and other animals migrating from the alleged slaughterhouse to the neighboring property increased. The neighbor provided time stamped pictures and videos of the rats.

The town of Londonderry requested that the court prohibit Otero-Rivera from owning livestock to prevent causing or maintaining a public nuisance, to pay Londonderry statutory penalties of \$275 for the first offense against a local or code ordinance and \$550 for each offense after the conviction date, pay the town's legal fees, and any additional relief.

A hearing is scheduled for Jan. 24.