ABOUT THIS GUIDE
This Guide identifies and explains on-line public resources available to help research the status of properties in the City of Chicago. The intent is to empower organizations and individuals to “understand the story” of a property with the ultimate goal of improving properties and strengthening communities.

Created by:
This guide is a product of the Chicago MicroMarket Recovery Program and LISC. It was compiled by Huttas Consulting with considerable contributions from Laura Armgardt of Chicago Initiative Corporation (CIC) and Matt Cole and Maggie Cassidy of Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS).
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Case Study

In the case study that follows, we research a property starting with finding the PIN, researching ownership, mortgages, HC cases, and tax and other liens. This case can be useful in guiding you through researching and understanding any Chicago property.
Intent and use of this manual

Each property has its own history and its own story. Researching a property with the intent of understanding ownership, liens, and the intent of owners and other interested parties is somewhat of a science and somewhat of an art. There is not always a definite source to unravel the mysteries of a particular property, but there are many good resources that can be helpful. This manual was created to pull together a list of the many public on-line resources that can help understand the “story” of a property. It lists some of the websites we have found to be most helpful and shares insights and suggestions to help you in your property journey of discovery.

The intent is to help organizations and individuals understand the story and ownership of a property, so they can help bring about positive outcomes in our communities. You will certainly find other good resources out there too. Neighbors and others who live in, work in, and are vested in a community can be great on-the-ground resources.

If you are a Micro Market Recovery Program partner, please enter any new information you observe, learn, or look up into the Developer Central database for each property you investigate.

What is a PIN and how is it used?

To start to research a property, you will need the PIN (property index number, a numerical code for the legal description of a piece of property. The PIN is a 14-digit number composed of a 10-digit base that is modified for condominiums by adding a 4-digit unit suffix. You may need to add 4 zeros to the end of a 10-digit PIN when searching for information for a property that is not a condominium. For more information about PINs and how the numbers indicate the property location on a tax map, please reference

http://www.cookcountyclerk.com/tds/maps/Pages/AboutPINs.aspx.

Most MMRP properties in the Developer Central database already have the identified PIN entered into the “Property ID” field on the Assets/Target screen in Developer Central. If you don’t have the PIN, you may use the Cook County property tax portal or the City of Chicago zoning website (both referenced in this document) to look up the PIN by address.
Researching a property in the City of Chicago

Cook County Property Tax Portal

http://www.cookcountypropertyinfo.com

This site can be a good place to start researching a property.

- Search for a property by PIN or by address, if you need to first find the PIN. If you are using the address, enter the appropriate directional ‘N’, ‘S’, ‘E’, or ‘W” before the street name.
- Use this site to verify the PIN and confirm that the photo shown of the property matches the physical property. (Note that the photos here are occasionally incorrect, so it is not 100%)

Other information that can be found on this site:
- Last tax payer of record and mailing address. (There is time lag between deed transfers and update of tax payer/owner on this site. The Recorder of Deeds site typically reflects ownership changes before this site.)
- Estimated property value and size
- Exemptions (which can also help you see determine if the owner is/was a homeowner occupant)
- Current tax status including amount of any back taxes (which can complicate the process/cost of returning a vacant building to reuse and occupancy)
- Taxes sold/ forfeited/ paid by tax buyer
- Short summary of legal actions, liens, foreclosures recorded against the property

Cook County Assessor’s Site

http://www.cookcountyassessor.com

This site is a good place to confirm unit count and obtain more detailed info about a property.

- Search for a property by PIN or by address, if you need to first find the PIN
- Unit count – this site is probably the best resource to confirm unit count
- Number of bedrooms, bathroom etc.
- History of property tax appeals
Researching a property in the City of Chicago

Cook County Clerk’s Delinquent Tax Search
http://www.cookcountyclerk.com/tsd/delinquenttaxsearch/Pages/default.aspx
This website shows tax delinquencies (sold, vacated, forfeited, open, etc.), as well as an estimate of how much is outstanding. Search using the property’s PIN.

City of Chicago Zoning Website
https://gisapps.cityofchicago.org/zoning/
This site can be used to view detailed zoning maps, other physical boundaries, and property detail. It can also be used to identify the PIN from a physical address.

- Search by address, intersection, or PIN
- Parcels and zoning is shown on the map
- Schools, wards, city owned parcels, and other details can be displayed by checking the boxes to the right of the map
- Click on the hyperlinked textual address to pull up property detail, including number of units
- Pop-up blocking in your browser must be disabled to show detail
Cook County Recorder of Deeds

http://cookrecorder.com

The Recorder of Deed’s website allows property look-up by PIN and shows recent actions and documents related to court filings, foreclosures, deeds/judicial sales, and liens. It tends to be the most reliable site to research a change in ownership.

- All line items are recorded from most recent to least recent.
- Interpreting these documents can enable you to understand the “story” of a property.
- Click on the associated record number to bring up more detailed information and see copies of the documents filed.
- Click on “view images” to view the actual scanned copy of the legal document.
- Turn off your pop-up blocker for the site or the document images will not open.
- TYPES of documents, deeds, and activities that may be shown:

  ➢ WARRANTY DEED, SPECIAL WARRANTY DEED, DEED, JUDICIAL DEED, QUIT CLAIM DEED, etc. reflect a change in ownership. The most recently recorded deed likely reflects current ownership. GRANTOR refers to the selling entity while GRANTEE refers to the receiving entity. As we know, sometimes property transfers and the deed doesn’t get recorded for weeks or months. We can check the MLS or realtor.com to know the last time the property transferred, but until a deed is recorded we don’t know for sure who the buyer was. In addition, until a deed is recorded, a new owner will not be the owner of record. The owner of record is always whoever is on the last recorded deed. While most new owners record their deed in a timely fashion, we often see banks complete a foreclosure, gain ownership of the building at auction, and then fail to record a deed for months or even years. In cases like these, while we know the bank is the owner, the owner of record is still the owner that was foreclosed upon.

  ➢ LIEN is a financial encumbrance on a property. It is a financial obligation that is held against the property, and thus the owner is liable for it. Ownership on a building cannot be transferred via most types of deeds without all liens being satisfied. Therefore, when we talk about a building having “clean title”, that means there are no liens against the property. Mortgages are liens, but they are recorded as MORTGAGE.

  ➢ MORTGAGE indicates a mortgage. Unlike deeds, the grantor and grantee are switched. GRANTOR is the person/entity taking out the mortgage, while GRANTEE is the lender (usually a bank).

  ➢ LIS PENDENS or LIS PENSENS FORECLOSURE indicate some legal action -- usually a mortgage foreclosure or a housing court case. In a mortgage foreclosure, the “grantor” will be the bank or lender (CitiMortgage, JP Morgan Chase, etc.). In a housing court
Researching a property in the City of Chicago

case, the “grantor” will be the City of Chicago. Opening up the document will also give you more information.

- **RELEASE** means a lien has been released-- it might be the mortgage, a different lien, or a court/city judgment. In order to determine what was released, refer to the number listed as “1st prior doc”. This number will correspond to a “Doc #” of an earlier document. The earlier document is what was released (no longer a hindrance on title—the obligation has been released).

- **COURT DOC** usually refers to an important court order, judgement, injunction, or other action. You will have to view the actual document to determine what’s going on. The most common items recorded as COURT DOC are demolition orders, injunctions, some receiver’s liens (for example, CIC’s receiver’s liens are often recorded as COURT DOC instead of LIEN), and administrative hearing judgements.
Researching a property in the City of Chicago

Cook County Clerk of the Circuit Court Full Electronic Docket Search

http://www.cookcountyclerkofcourt.org/

This site shows information on judgments and any upcoming court dates.

- You can search the docket either by case number which will always include a year followed by M1 (the relevant court division) and six number (i.e., 2018-M1-123456) or by defendant using just the property’s address number. Then search the displayed list of for the exact address. Due to an odd glitch in the site you may need to search by defendant more than once to get the address list to appear.

- Full Electronic Docket Case Search is what you’re looking for. As of Sept’16, select “Online case info” on the left and then “Full Electronic Docket Search” will show as an option.

- Housing court cases are considered CIVIL (forfeiture cases are chancery and are considerably more difficult to look up easily). As of Sept’16, CIVIL is the default if you do not specify.

- Choose a search by name and by defendant

- You can search for all court cases on a street by searching by name, selecting “defendant”, and entering the name of the street as the name of the defendant (for example, Peoria). That search will bring up all cases related to addresses on Peoria, listed in chronological order. You can use control-F to bring up a search box and to search for the street number if it isn’t in the top results. You should do this for all street names in your target blocks about once a month, to make sure you are aware of all active court cases.

- If hitting “enter” to perform a search doesn’t work, you may have to click on “search”

- Click the case number to open the case detail.

- Some things to look for in the electronic docket:
  - If an attorney has ever appeared in the case, their contact info will be listed at the top.
  - If an owner or other non-represented interested party has appeared, you will see their name with the notation “pro se” – their contact info doesn’t get published but CIC or NHS may be able to get it from one of the city attorneys.
  - The various activity dates correspond to court dates. The next court date, if there is one, can be found by scrolling all the way to the bottom.
Researching a property in the City of Chicago

- Breakdown of court call types - the day of the week, time, and court room will give you an indication of what type of case it is. The information below is current as of Sept 2016:
  - Condo call: Monday mornings, room 1109. For distressed condominium buildings citywide.
  - Conservation: Monday-Thursday mornings, room 1103 and 1105. For occupied (usually) buildings with general code violations. Organized geographically (i.e., all Woodlawn buildings are heard on Wednesdays).
  - DGHES (Drug and Gang House Enforcement Section): Thursday mornings, room 1111. For buildings targeted for code enforcement by Chicago Police Department because of criminal activity. DGHES cases tend to be more imminent in nature. The judge also has the ability to enter more serious judgements in this call due to the criminal element.
  - Demolition: Tuesday-Thursday mornings, room 1109; Monday-Wednesday mornings, room 1111. For buildings the City is seeking authority to demolish. Organized geographically (i.e., all Woodlawn buildings are heard on Tuesdays).
  - Exterior Wall: Wednesday afternoons, room 1107. For buildings over 5 stories tall.
  - Heat: Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, room 1105. Buildings with insufficient/no heat and/or hot water.
  - Lead Paint: Wednesday mornings, room 1107. Buildings whose juvenile residents have tested positive for elevated levels of lead in their bloodstream.
  - STF (Strategic Task Force): Tuesday mornings, room 1107. Buildings with serious code violations of various types; demolition is among the available remedies.
  - Technical: Monday mornings, room 1107. Buildings with plumbing, electrical, fire code, or other technical violations.
  - Vacant Building: Thursday mornings, room 1107; Friday mornings, room 1105. Targeted vacant buildings that might not be demo-worthy. Available tools include receivership, abandonment, forfeiture, or demolition.

- A similar process can be used to view foreclosure cases. You can find the foreclosure case number by viewing the Lis Pendens document on the Recorder of Deeds. It will be something like “14-CH-07183”.
  - Select “chancery” in the Division Name drop down.
Researching a property in the City of Chicago

- Enter the year, division code (in these cases, CH instead of M1), and case number. Hit Search.

- Once in the docket, look for the following entries:
  - JUDGMENT OF FORECLOSURE & SALE- pretty self-explanatory.
  - APPOINT SELLING OFFICER, APPROVE SALE, REPORT OF SALE AND DISTRIBUTION, SHERIFFS SALE APPROVED, etc. - the case is moving through the judicial sale process.
  - ORDER FOR POSSESSION is most important. It means the foreclosure is completed, has gone through judicial sale, the sale has been approved by the judge, and is now owned by the bank (unless there was a higher bidder at auction). At this point, the former owner no longer has the property and you should expect to see a new deed recorded on title soon.
City of Chicago Vacant Building Map
https://ipiweb.cityofchicago.org/vbr/MapSearch.aspx
A tool on the City of Chicago website where you can get information on vacant buildings registered with the city or subject to a complaint.

- You can search by address, community area, or ward among other categories and can view properties on an interactive map.
- Click on the associated address link to see photos of problem conditions and other associated issues.
- While this Vacant Building Map contains useful information, it can be outdated and inaccurate.

City of Chicago Building Data Warehouse
https://webapps.cityofchicago.org/buildingviolations
This page on the City of Chicago website provides detailed information on inspections, building violations, permits pulled, and administrative hearing cases associated with a property.

- Search the site by address.
- This is a good initial place to see if building violations are subject to just an administrative hearing (like traffic court for buildings) or have been kicked into Cook County Circuit Court (which could ultimately lead to demolition).
- This site only shows permits issued, and does not show ones applied for and in-process

City of Chicago Building Permit Status Portal
This webpage shows more detailed information for building permits

- Similar to the Data Warehouse, but with more detailed information regarding permits.
- This portal will show issued permits as well as permit applications that are still in process.
Researching a property in the City of Chicago

- You can search by entering the house number followed by the first letter of the street name.

**Secretary of State LLC Search**

http://www.ilsos.gov/corporatellc/

This website allows you to search an LLC name to find the registered agent’s name and address.

Enter the LLC name and search. When the owner of record for a property is an LLC, you can use this site to try to identify the person(s) behind the LLC.

**Tax Sale and Tax Buyers**

**Tax Buyers**

When taxes are sold, that means that a third party has essentially paid that year’s taxes on the property, entitling them to a certificate for the amount paid. The certificate indicates that the party now has an interest in the property. If the certificate is not paid (by the owner or someone else) by the end of the redemption period, the certificate holder will have the option to go to tax deed thus gaining ownership of the property.

There are primarily two different motivations for buying taxes. The first is to hopefully eventually gain ownership of the property. While tax buying is a slow path towards ownership, it can be a good way to stake a claim in a property if you know the owners are not able to pay the tax bill. For example, a concerned neighbor could buy the taxes on a vacant building next door, with the hopes that down the line they could gain ownership of the property.

The other primary motivation behind tax buying is to make money. Sold taxes are subject to interest and fees, so anyone wanting to redeem would be paying an amount beyond the original tax bill. High interest rates make tax buying a lucrative business.

While there is no surefire way to know a tax buyer’s motivations, paying for an estimate of redemption will at least show the tax buyer’s name and address. Getting in contact will allow you to get further information. Tax buyers who are in the business of buying taxes may be willing to negotiate the amount due, since overall they just want to get paid, not to own the property. However, someone with a vested interest in the actual building may be less willing to negotiate on interest/fees/etc. because they actually do hope to eventually own the property.
Estimates of Redemption

While the Cook County Tax Portal can tell you that taxes on a property have been sold, you may want more information such as the total amount owed and the name of the tax buyer. For this, you’ll need to go to the Cook County Clerk’s office, Real Estate and Tax Division, located in the Cook County building at 118 N. Clark, Room 434. Make sure to have the building’s PIN with you and cash (you do have to pay for estimates of redemption, and they do not take credit cards). This office will be able to provide a calculation of the amount necessary to satisfy taxes that have been sold to a third party.

After entering the Real Estate and Tax Division’s office, you will need to fill out an order form with the building’s PIN and bring it to the customer service counter. The employee will then run the PIN to see how many years of sold/forfeited taxes are on the building. After paying for the estimates, you will have the option to either wait for your estimate, pick it up later, or have it mailed to you. Once you receive your estimate, you will be able to see how much in total is owed in taxes, the finals date(s) for redemption, and the tax buyer’s name and address.

You can find more information at:
http://www.cookcountyclerk.com/tsd/taxredemption/estimateofredemption/Pages/default.aspx

Case Study

In the case study that follows, we research a property starting with finding the PIN, researching ownership, mortgages, HC cases, and tax and other liens. This case can be useful in guiding you through researching and understanding any Chicago property.

8006-08 S Ellis Case Study

8006-08 S. Ellis is a vacant building located in the Chatham MMRP that has previously been under Chicago Investment Corporation (CIC) Community Initiatives receivership.

Determining the PIN- while the PIN is available in Developer Central for most buildings, it can be verified by going to either the Assessor’s office or the City of Chicago Zoning Portal. Both source will also verify unit count.
Researching a property in the City of Chicago

Zoning:

Assessor’s office:

Property Characteristics

2016 Tax Year Property Information

- PIN: 20-35-110-004-0000
- Property Location: 800 S ELLIS AVE
- City: CHICAGO
- Township: HydePark
- Property Classification: 211
- Square Footage (Land): 0.712
- Neighborhood: 120
- Taxcode: 70001

Assessed Valuation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2016 First Pass</th>
<th>2015 Board of Review Certified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land Assessed Value</td>
<td>5,369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Assessed Value</td>
<td>20,263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Assessed Value</td>
<td>25,632</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Property Characteristics

- Estimated 2016 Market Value: $316,320
- Estimated 2015 Market Value: $316,320
- Description: Two to six apartments, over 82 years
- Residence Type: Three Story
- Use: Multi Family
- Apartments: 6
- Exterior Construction: Masonry
**Researching ownership** - The Cook County Recorder of Deeds will be able to give a full picture of ownership, mortgages and other liens, court cases, and any other encumbrances on title.

- **Current owner:** Tchia Amet Hambric-Vela, as evidenced from the most recent recorded deed “TRUSTEES DEED” recorded on 2/6/2012. Everything is in chronological order from most recent to least recent, so because there are no deeds above the 2012 Trustees Deed, Hambric-Vela is the current owner of record.

- **Mortgages:** There was a mortgage taken out on this property on 9/22/1997, by Jane Hambric from Merchantile Mortgage Co. Clicking on the “mortgage” hyperlink will open more details on the right:
The mortgage was for $55,000. Clicking “view images” will cause a pop-up of the actual recorded document (can be useful for finding addresses and more details about the mortgagee).

Over the years, the mortgage was assigned to another mortgage company twice; once in 1997 and once in 1998. We can verify that is the same mortgage that’s being transferred because the “1st Prior Doc#” corresponds to the “Doc#” for the mortgage (98267999). Anytime there is a number in the “1st Prior Doc#” column, it can be traced back to a corresponding previous document.

A release for this mortgage was recorded on 11/29/2012. Because the “1st Prior Doc#” corresponds to the original mortgage document number, we know the release was for the 1997 mortgage.

Because this mortgage was released, and there have been no subsequent new mortgages recorded, we know that at this time, there are no mortgages on this property.
While there is no mortgage on the property, there are other recorded documents that could indicate an encumbrance on title.

- There was a “COURT DOC” recorded on 10/29/2013. In order to get more information, we’ll have to view the actual document:

- This is an Administrative Hearings judgement for $500. This is an example of an outstanding amount that would need to be paid at closing were the property sold.
There was also a “LIS PENDENS” filed on 4/25/2016. The grantor is CHICAGO, which indicates a housing court case. If the grantor was a financial institution and the document traced back to a mortgage, that would indicate a mortgage foreclosure.

- Upon viewing the LIS PENDENS document, we can see the case number (16-M1-401320).

Finally, there was an “ORDER” recorded on 4/8/2016:

- This is a court order appointing CII as limited receiver. Because there was a receiver, there will eventually be a certificate filed to claim the costs incurred during receivership. This can then be leveraged in the future.
Researching Taxes

- Now that we have a fuller picture of all encumberances on the property, we can take a look at the tax situation. It’s usually easiest to start with the Cook County Tax Portal:

- This shows the tax amounts since 2011, and we can see that 2015 is partially unpaid (as evidenced by the “pay online” prompt). The Tax Sale (Delinquencies) heading shows that this property has multiple years of sold taxes. 2012 was sold, and 2013, 2014, and part of 2015 were paid by the tax buyer. In order to get detailed information on what was sold, redemption dates, and the tax buyer’s contact information, we would have to go pull the taxes at the Clerk’s office.
This is the estimate for redemption for 8006-08 S Ellis:

**NOTE: THIS ORIGINAL ESTIMATE MUST BE RETURNED AT TIME OF PAYMENT**

**ESTIMATE OF COST OF REDEMPTION: Annual sale**

**Owner's Name or Trust No., Mailing Address & Phone No.**

Name: _______________________
Address: _______________________
Telephone: _______________________

Date Prepared: 06-04-2016
Permanent Real Estate Index Number: 20-00-110-011-0000
Volume Number: 278
Class: 2-11 Tax Code: 70001
Property Sold to: USE IN COURT DEPT. TAX LNS

For 2011 General Taxes or Special Assessment WARRANT NO. __________ Inst NO. __________
Date of Sale: 08-06-2016 Cert. No. 11-0007403
Redemption date extended to 06-24-2016 By Affidavit of Purchaser

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**SUBSEQUENT TAXES ARE PAID BY THE TAX PURCHASER AND ARE SUBJECT TO ANNUAL INCREASE FROM THE DATE PAID**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>DATE PAID</th>
<th>AMOUNT PAID</th>
<th>PENALTY</th>
<th>PENALTY AMOUNT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>10-16-2014</td>
<td>2,308.37</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>770.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>10-16-2014</td>
<td>2,459.99</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>790.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>03-24-2015</td>
<td>2,595.44</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>709.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>08-17-2015</td>
<td>2,468.26</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>254.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>03-24-2016</td>
<td>1,547.67</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>185.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Subsequent Tax: 12,629.73
Total Subsequent Penalty: 2,950.43

FEES: ARE SUBJECT TO INCREASE AS PAID BY THE TAX PURCHASER.

Clerk: 17.61
Treasurer: 0.00
Adver: 230.00
Mat: 196.48
Sheriff: 600.00
Filing: 499.00
Buyer: 36.00
Other: 125.00
Title Costs: 0.00

TOTAL FEES: 1,701.89

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The Illinois Property Tax Code Requires Payment Be Made in Full With Currency, Certified or Cashier's Check, Express or U.S. Money Orders. No Partial Payments. All Checks Made Payable to David D. Orr, Cook County Clerk.

**IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ REVERSE SIDE**

**ORDER NO. A370960**

**AMOUNT OF SALE**: $3,200.15

Penalty Periods: 6% x 0 0% 0%
Add interest at 1/32% per month when redemption period is extended from 02-06-2014 to 06-24-2016 6.0% $0.00

**SUBSEQUENT TAXES**

Total Subsequent Taxes: $12,629.73
Total Subsequent Penalty: 2,950.43

Clerk, Adver, Mat, Sheriff, Filing, Torrens & Court Costs: 1,704.89
**Redemption Fees**: $10.00
**Cost of Estimate**: $3.00
GRAND TOTAL: $20,172.80

**NOTE: THE GRAND TOTAL IS SUBJECT TO INCREASE**

Sale penalties increase every 6 months from the date of sale. Additional penalty of 0% amounting to $__________ after _______.

**ESTIMATE CHECKED & AUDITED**

**APPROVED**

**MAY 04 2016**

**COOK COUNTY CLERK**
The total estimate is $20,175.20
Tax buyer: USBNK CUST DLPHN TAX LNS
Redemption date: 5/26/2016

Therefore, if someone wanted to redeem the taxes, they would have to pay approximately $20,175.20 (subject to interest recalculations), and would have until 5/26/2016 to do so.

**Department of Buildings**

Looking up the building on the Department of Buildings database can give valuable insight to the physical condition of the property.
Clicking on any of the inspections will give more detailed information about specific violations. After clicking on the failed TBI Complaint Inspection from 12/22/2015:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIOLATION</th>
<th>BUILDING CODE CITATION</th>
<th>VIOLATION DETAILS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CN104015</td>
<td>Replace broken, missing or defective window panel: (13-196-550 A)</td>
<td>EAST BASEMENT WINDOWS BOARDED, SOUTH ELEVATION BASEMENT WINDOW BROKEN, 1ST FLOOR SOUTH UNIT BROKEN WINDOW.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN75944</td>
<td>Failed to maintain roof downspouts in good repair and working condition. (13-106-500, 13-106-630(b), 13-196-841, 18-29-1101, 18-29-1105, 18-29-1106)</td>
<td>MISSING SECTION OF DOWNSPOUT AT REAR OF BUILDING.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN104035</td>
<td>Failed to maintain windows in sound condition and good repair. (13-106-550(b) and (f))</td>
<td>ALL WINDOW FRAMES FLAKING, PEELING PAINT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN02014</td>
<td>Failed to maintain fire parapet wall and coping in good repair and free from cracks and defects. (13-156-530, 13-196-530(c) and 13-196-841)</td>
<td>PARAPET WALLS SPALLING BRICKS, MISSING MORTAR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN12022</td>
<td>Failed to construct floor over basement with materials of at least one hour fire resistance, other than in single family and two family dwellings. (13-60-200)</td>
<td>BASEMENT 606 MISSING PLASTER AND LATH AT CEILING.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC2020</td>
<td>Failed to obtain building permit for erecting, enlarging, altering, repairing, removing or demolishing a building or part of a building. (13-12-050, 13-32-3010, 13-32-130)</td>
<td>WALL FRAMED IN BASEMENT 606.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN103035</td>
<td>Repair or replace defective structural member. (13-196-530 A)</td>
<td>JOISTS CUT OUT FOR PLUMBING AT BASEMENT 606.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN70014</td>
<td>Failed to maintain exterior stairways in safe condition and in sound repair. (13-196-570, 13-196-841)</td>
<td>RUSTING STEEL BEAMS, RUSTED AND BROKEN 6X6 POST BRACKETS, 6X6 POST DOUBLE NOTCHED FOR RIM BOARDS, 6X6 POST TWISTED, ALL STRINGERS AND RIM BOARDS JUST NAILED, PLANS AND PERMITS REQUIRED.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CN106015</td>
<td>Failed to maintain interior stairway system in safe condition and sound repair. (13-196-570)</td>
<td>STAIRS MISSING SPINDLES AT GUARDRAILS AND HANDRAILS, DANGEROUS AND HAZARDOUS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL0033</td>
<td>Strap and secure raceway and armored cable. (18-27-110.12)</td>
<td>PROPERLY SUPPORT ALL CONDUIT RUNS AT EXTERIOR AREA OF BUILDING AND THROUGHOUT ALL BASEMENT AREAS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL0017</td>
<td>Provide ground continuity for electrical cable, raceway, and enclosure. (18-27-300.10, 18-27-300.13)</td>
<td>PROVIDE GROUND CONTINUITY FOR PIPE APART AT FITTINGS AT REAR PORCH AREAS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL0025</td>
<td>Install system 3 emergency lighting. (18-27-700.8, 18-27-700.22)</td>
<td>PROVIDE SYSTEM 3 EMERGENCY LIGHTS IN FRONT STAIRWAY AREAS AND BASEMENT AREAS.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL0042</td>
<td>Ground portable appliance and equipment. (18-27-250.10)</td>
<td>PROVIDE A WATER MAIN GROUND CONDUCTOR TO WITHIN 5’ OF WATER METER OR VALVE.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL0085</td>
<td>Replace defective live front service and distribution equipment with dead front. (18-27-384.5)</td>
<td>PROVIDE A DEAD FRONT TYPE DISCONNECT.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL0084</td>
<td>Provide the required diagram and load calculation for services, feeders and required equipment. (18-27-215.3, 18-27-220)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL0065</td>
<td>All boxes shall comply with the dimension requirements of Article 370. Trough not sized properly at panel areas. (18-27-370)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL0065</td>
<td>Provide weatherproof boxes, lights, fittings and approved raceways for rear porch areas. (18-27-110.11)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EL0091</td>
<td>Obtain permit for electrical wiring and equipment installed without permit. (13-12-050)</td>
<td>OBTAIN ELECTRICAL PERMIT AND CONTRACTOR TO CORRECT VIOLATIONS AND FOR INSTALLATION OF NEW ELECTRICAL PANELS WITHOUT PLANS AND PERMITS.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Permits can also be searched on the Department of Buildings:

Because 8006 S Essex is the only building that comes up under the search, we know that there are no permit applications on file for this building.

**Court Cases**

Because there was a Lis Pendens filed against this property by the City of Chicago, we know that there was/is a recent housing court case. Looking up the court case can give an even better idea of what’s going on. From looking at the Lis Pendens document, we know that the case number is 16-M1-401320.
Case docket:

Case Information Summary for Case Number
2016-M1-401320

Case Type: HOUSING
District: First Municipal
Calendar:

Party Information

Plaintiff(s)
CITY CHICAGO

Attorney(s)
CORPORATION COUNSEL
30 N LASALLE 800
CHICAGO IL. 60602
(312) 744-7150

Defendant(s)
8006-8008 S ELLIS

Attorney(s)

HAMBRIC ALISON STA

JOHNSON BERNARD H

LLUVIA ROSA

NON RECORD CLAIMAN

TCHIYA AMET EL MOT

PRO SE

UNKNOWN OWNERS

VELA HAMBRIC AMET

The service list appears at the top and lists all named defendants in the case. Sometimes there will be contact information available.

From here we can see the progression of the court case, starting from the date of filing on 4/8/16:

Case Activity

Activity Date: 4/8/2016
Date: 4/12/2016
Court Time: 09:30
Court Room: 1107
Court Fee: 249.00
Adj Dunning Amount: 12500.00

HOUSING COMPLAINT FILED

Attorney: CORPORATION COUNSEL

The case was filed on 4/8/16 (‘Activity Date’), with a first court date of 4/12/16, at 9:30am in room 1107.
Researching a property in the City of Chicago

Some highlights from the court case:

On 4/14/16, an emergency motion was filed to appoint a receiver (as indicated by “APPOINT GUARDIAN AD LITEM, TRUSTEE, ADMINISTRATOR OR EXECUTOR – ALLOWED”). In this case, the receiver appointed was CII.

On 5/17/16, there was an order for the remaining tenants to vacate the building. The case was also set for case management (status check) on 6/14/16, at 9:30am in room 1107.

On 7/5/16, CII was discharged as receiver.

Based on all the research we’ve done, we now know that:

PIN: 20-35-110-016
Owner: Tchia Amet Hambric-Vela
Mortgage: none
Taxes: multiple years of sold taxes, estimate of redemption is around $20,000
Permits/Violations: no permits on file, numerous violations found during Department of Buildings inspections
Court case: The property has an active court case, on Tuesday mornings in room 1107 (strategic task force). We know that the property was vacated, and that there was a receiver appointed (in this case, it was CII) but the receiver has since been discharged.
Conclusion: Now that we have a clearer picture of this property - mortgage (no current mortgage in this case), court cases, violations, and tax and other liens, and current/former receivers on the property, we can determine appropriate next steps.

Most of this research was conducted on-line and all information is public information. We hope that this case study and manual will help all interested parties understand and become engaged in their communities and the properties in our neighborhoods.