

Footballer Arshavin Fights to Save Neighbors' Homes in St. Petersburg

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Arshavin is now back on the books of his boyhood club, Zenit St. Petersburg.

In an apparent show of community spirit, former Arsenal Football Club forward Andrei Arshavin has taken up the cause of his next-door neighbors in St. Petersburg by asking the city's governor to stop their homes being leveled, business daily Vedomosti reported.

A local court earlier ruled that the Nikitinskaya Manor residential complex on 22 Gornaya Ulitsa in St. Petersburg's northern suburbs, which is home to 250 people, was built without authorization and must be demolished.

Arshavin, now back on the books of his boyhood club, Zenit St. Petersburg, lives three doors down at 19 Gornaya Ulitsa, but has a parking space at Nikitinskaya Manor, one of its residents told the newspaper last week.

"A situation has arisen in which of all of the participants in the conflict, the ones who suffer

are the ones who are least to blame: the people who bought the accommodation," Arshavin, 33, said in a letter to Acting St. Petersburg Governor Georgy Poltavchenko. "Given the lack of affordable and comfortable accommodation a reasonable alternative to demolition would be to help legalize the building."

The residents said in their own letter to Poltavchenko their homes comply with all of the relevant rules and they and have already paid for the apartments.

The residents, who have lived there since 2012, will be praying that Arshavin's letter convinces the governor to intervene on their behalf.

The early signs are not promising, however. A spokesman for St. Petersburg Deputy Governor Marat Oganessian, who is in charge of construction in the northern capital, said the residents should try to recover their money from the developer, as the court's ruling must be fulfilled.

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