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CONSULTING BUILDING DESIGN

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Ms. Agnes Sondervan-Rosenfeld
City of Los Angeles Department of Building & Safety
201 North Figueroa Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

July 17th, 2024

via email to : ericacontreras@yahoo.com DRAFT

RE : Public Hearing Regarding Unpermitted Deck Legalization at 13793 North Wheeler Avenue, Los Angeles
APN 2503-002-040

Dear Ms. Sondervan-Rosenfeld,

Thank you for receiving this Written Protest with regard to the Code Enforcement Action on the property at 13793 Wheeler Avenue, Los Angeles, APN 2503-0020-040, scheduled for a hearing on July 31st, 2024 at 10AM at 200 North Spring Street, Room 340.

Pursuant to Los Angeles Department of Building and Safety's Order to Comply and Notice of Fee dated November 8th, 2018, Case #813477 & Order #A-4859326, I was hired in early April 2019 by Owner Erica Contreras to Legalize an Unpermitted Rear Yard Wood Deck at the Subject Property.

Given the time sensitivity, I started work on the project immediately. I personally made all the field measurements of the existing structure, and did all the legalization drafting, calculations, detailing, and Plan Checking with LADBS. I met with City Attorney's Office staff. I walked the job with Grading for the GPI; each field visit required that I drive from my office in Mar Vista to the northeast valley. Unsurprisingly, the most challenging aspects of the legalization involved Zoning issues rather than Structural ones, and LADBS Staff-- Van Nuys Branch Supervisors Tamera Svetich and Bihn Phan in particular-- proved truly helpful in crafting permittable Documents.

Permit Application 19010-20000-01921/Plan Check #B19VN07511 was Approved by Plan Check Engineer Jeffrey Tangonan on June 3rd, 2019. I had also by that point in time established contact with Hearing Officer Michele Worden, and Senior Inspector Marshall Rumpf, both at the Van Nuys Office, who reviewed the Permit Documents to their satisfaction as well.

Pursuant to the legalization process we were directed to submit drawings to LADWP for an Encroachment Approval. I submitted an Encroachment Application with requisite attachments on 05.23.19, application #19010-20000-01921 to encroachments@ladwp.com.

I received a Confirmation from LADWP on May 24th, 2019, which indicated that the processing time was 3-4 months and that I would receive a Tracking Number and further instructions once the Application had been processed.

That was the last I heard from LADWP. Obviously, at an institutional level they had an extraordinarily difficult balance of 2019. And then came COVID, extraordinarily difficult for the entire world.

MEMORANDUM

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So, in early June of 2019 my client *did have* an LADBS-Approved Set of Drawings, and a Licensed Contractor ready to start the project immediately, pursuant to your Order to Comply. If LADWP had either approved or rejected the project in an even remotely timely fashion we would not be having this conversation. But they did not do that, and it hardly seems appropriate to now hold my client responsible for the consequences arising from that singular failure on LADWP's part, levying significant fines when every good faith effort was made at the time to resolve the problem to the satisfaction of the appropriate Jurisdictional Authority. Of course my client remains prepared to proceed straightaway with the Compliance Action pending the formal encroachment ruling by LADWP. We sincerely hope that the Approved Ready-to-Issue Status of the Drawings can be reinstated without significant additional Plan Check Fees or Work Effort.

I am happy to forward any specific documents from my file for your further review but a check of your own record, and those of LADWP's, will substantiate the foregoing claims in every particular.

Thank you all at LADBS for your service, ongoing, to this great City of ours.

Kind regards.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wm. Hogan", with a stylized flourish at the end.

William Hogan
Designer

MEMORANDUM