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Submissions by the public in compliance with the Commission Rules and Operating Procedures (ROPs), Rule 4.3, are distributed to the Commission and uploaded online. Please note that “compliance” means that the submission complies with deadline, delivery method (hard copy and/or electronic) AND the number of copies. Please review the Commission ROPs to ensure that you meet the submission requirements. The ROPs can be accessed at <http://planning.lacity.org>, by selecting “Commissions & Hearings” and selecting the specific Commission.

All compliant submissions may be accessed as follows:

- **“Initial Submissions”**: Compliant submissions received no later than by end of day Monday of the week prior to the meeting, which are not integrated by reference or exhibit in the Staff Report, will be appended at the end of the Staff Report. The Staff Report is linked to the case number on the specific meeting agenda.
- **“Secondary Submissions”**: Submissions received after the Initial Submission deadline up to 48-hours prior to the Commission meeting are contained in this file and bookmarked by the case number.
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If you have any questions, please contact the Commission Office at (213) 978-1300.

SECONDARY SUBMISSIONS

July 21, 2020

Hilary de Vries
C/O Woodstock Road Homeowners Coalition
2717 Woodstock Road
Los Angeles, CA

Department of City Planning
200 North Spring Street, Room 750
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: 7831 Willow Glen Road
ZA-2019-2493-1A
ENV-2019-2494-CE

To the Central Los Angeles Area Planning Commission:

I am writing in support of the appeal to the Zoning Administrator's approval on 3/31/20 of a variance for an "existing over-in-height fence" at 7831 Willow Glen.

I am writing as co-chair of the Woodstock Road Homeowners Coalition that was formed by more than 20 concerned neighbors in 2014. I am also a stakeholder in the neighborhood and have owned my house at 2717 Woodstock for more than 20 years.

In my capacity as coalition co-chair, I filed the original complaint to LADBS on 12/8/2015 about unpermitted construction of an over-height wall along the front perimeter at 7831 Willow Glen. In response to my complaint - which remains open - LADBS issued an Order to Comply to the owner of 7831 Willow Glen, Mr. Dmitri Moore, on 12/16/2015. (See attached screenshot below.)

Mr. Moore chose to ignore the Order to Comply and completed construction of the over-height wall in defiance of LADBS and in violation of city building codes which limit front yard walls to a height of 3.5 feet.

When I spoke with LADBS about the non-compliance, Inspector Deckert – who had inspected the property and issued the stop work order – told me that Mr. Moore had refused to comply with the order or engage with LADBS in any capacity. He told me that in response, LADBS would file a lien on the property that would require a variance before the house could be sold.

Hence Mr. Moore's request for that variance last year – five years after the wall was built.

To be clear – the ZA approval is for "an existing over-in-height *fence*." What Mr. Moore built is no fence, but a 277 linear foot 8' *wall* which entirely encloses the front perimeter of the property and which has never been permitted or inspected. The wall's construction, its materials, composition and method - even its actual height and length - has never been independently

determined let alone approved, and yet Theodore L. Irving, Associate Zoning Administrator, inexplicably approved the variance in his determination letter of March 31, 2020.

Mr. Irving has *no* idea as to the wall's construction and materials – it could be made of unreinforced concrete block, sand or cottage cheese for all Mr. Irving knows. Yet he approved it. He has no idea of the wall's actual height and length other than Mr. Moore's assertion that it is a 277 linear foot 8' wall. Yet he approved it.

Without LADBS inspection and approval, the over height, oversized wall remains not only out compliance with city codes, but a hazard to subsequent owners of 7831 Willow Glen and the public given the 277 linear foot wall's towering proximity just inches from a public thoroughfare in an active earthquake zone.

In fact, Mr. Moore has a history of unpermitted construction at 7831 Willow Glen. According to LADBS records, only *two* permits have been issued to Mr. Moore since he acquired the property in 2010 - a kitchen and bath remodel/repair in 2012 and new exterior stucco over siding in 2015 - despite the many alterations and additions he has made. In addition to the over-height wall, Mr. Moore has installed unpermitted exterior lighting, a new garage door and driveway apron - which he incorrectly claims is the property's "front yard" - exterior gates, a second driveway, and 200+ linear feet of over-height hedges immediately adjacent to the street and which impede the view of on-coming traffic by north-bound drivers on Willow Glen.

In seeking the variance for his over-height wall, Mr. Moore claims he built the wall as a necessary protection against crime. In fact, there are no reports of criminal complaints at 7831 Willow Glen filed with LAPD in the ten years Mr. Moore has owned the property. Mr. Moore also claims he needed the over-height wall to protect his property from mudslides. Mudslides are a frequent and seasonal occurrence in many Los Angeles neighborhoods, yet no allowance exists in city building codes for over-height, bunker-style walls as a protection against mudslides.

In applying for the variance, Mr. Moore supplied photographs of a garden wall and retaining wall under construction at 2300 Hercules as supporting evidence for his over-height wall. The photograph is undated and the height of the walls cannot be determined. According to LADBS records there are *no* permits issued for garden walls or retaining walls at 2300 Hercules. In fact, LADBS issued an Order to Comply on 4/23/20 in response to a complaint about unpermitted construction at 2300 Hercules – an order which remains open and under investigation. (See screenshot below.)

In his application, Mr. Moore also supplied color photographs of several houses that feature tall hedges along the property perimeters as supporting evidence for his over height wall and hedges – this is a meaningless metric; again, none of photographs are dated, the addresses are not visible and the hedge's heights cannot be determined from the photographs.

The fact remains, that Mr. Moore knowingly and willfully constructed his over-height wall without permits or inspections in defiance of LADBS's repeated Order to Comply and a refusal to engage with LADBS inspectors. Now, five years after the wall's construction - and unable to

sell the house without a variance - Mr. Moore wants a get-out-of-jail free card for defying city building codes and enforcement.

Either the city building codes – and the city’s means of enforcing those codes – have meaning and authority or they don’t. If the Planning Department allows the ZA's approval for the variance to remain, it is tantamount to telling every developer, every home-owner in Los Angeles, to ignore city building codes, defy city Orders to Comply and build whatever structures you want and should you need a variance, simply petition the Zoning Administrator years after the fact, and the variance will be granted without regard to public safety.

The Planning Department should not be actively encouraging – and enabling - the public disregard for city building codes. It is in the business of enforcement for the public good.

The ZA’s misguided approval of the variance needs to be overturned, the over height wall demolished and any new wall should be brought into compliance with city codes – permitted and inspected - at the owner’s expense.

Sincerely,

Hilary de Vries

Attached screen shots of LADBS Orders to Comply below.



7831 W WILLOW GLEN ROAD

Date Received: 12/8/2015
 Description: FENCES WALLS AND HEDGES THAT ARE TOO HIGH
 Inspector: EDMOND DECKERT
 Phone: (213)252-3982
 Status: UNDER INVESTIGATION

Order Information

Order Number	Order Type	Effective Date	Issued By	Phone
0	ORDER TO COMPLY	12/16/2015	EDMOND DECKERT	(213)252-3982

Code Violation Information

Violation	Date in Compliance
Over height fence/walls in the primeter ajacent to the street.	

2300 N HERCULES DR

Date Received: 4/21/2020
 Description: CONSTRUCTION DONE WITHOUT PERMITS OR INSPECTIONS
 Inspector: JOHN TCHANG
 Phone: (213)252-3965
 Status: UNDER INVESTIGATION

Order Information

Order Number	Order Type	Effective Date	Issued By	Phone
0	ORDER TO COMPLY	4/23/2020	JOHN TCHANG	(213)252-3965

Code Violation Information

Violation	Date in Compliance
Building plans are required.	
Construction work is being performed contrary to the code.	
A permit is required for the work performed.	
Grading was performed without first obtaining a permit.	