

## GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONTENTS OF THIS FILE

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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.
- **“Day of Hearing Submissions”**: Submissions after the Secondary Submission deadline up to and including the day of the Commission meeting will be uploaded to this file within two business days after the Commission meeting.

Material which does not comply with the submission rules is not distributed to the Commission.

### ENABLE BOOKMARS ONLINE:

\*\*If you are using Explorer, you need will need to enable the Acrobat  toolbar to see the bookmarks on the left side of the screen.

If you are using Chrome, the bookmarks are on the upper right-side of the screen. If you do not want to use the bookmarks, simply scroll through the file.

If you have any questions, please contact the Commission Office at (213) 978-1300.

# **SECONDARY SUBMISSIONS**



**Venskus & Associates**  
A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION

603 WEST OJAI AVE., SUITE F  
OJAI, CALIFORNIA  
93023  
TEL: 805-272-8628

1055 WILSHIRE BLVD., SUITE 1996  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA  
90017  
TEL: 213-482-4200

August 17, 2020

Submitted via email to: [apcwestla@lacity.org](mailto:apcwestla@lacity.org)

West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission  
200 North Spring Street, Room 532  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: DIR-2018-1485-CDP-MEL-1A (426-428 E Grand Blvd.)**

Dear West LA Area Planning Commissioners:

This law firm represents People Organized for Westside Renewal (POWER) and Citizens Preserving Venice in the above-entitled matter. The California Women's Law Center (CWLC), a non-profit law and policy center dedicated to breaking down barriers for women and girls, is in agreement with the content of the letter. We are writing to encourage you to uphold the appeal and deny the application when you consider the case DIR-2018-1485-CDP-MEL-1A (426-428 E Grand Blvd.) at your hearing on Wednesday.

The April 22, 2020 CDP and Mello determinations for this proposed project, and the staff report prepared for this hearing that respond to some of the points raised in the appeal, contain errors that if not corrected, will become precedent for future cases, especially regarding proper enforcement of the City's Interim Administrative Procedures (IAP) for complying with the state Mello Act, and the broader issue of the Commission's duty to ensure that abuses of discretion do not systematically adversely impact affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income people within the Venice Coastal Zone.

We are drawing your attention to a number of key issues that show you must uphold the appeal and deny the application.

First, the Staff Report supersedes the authority of this Commission by overturning its prior finding that the project site consists of a larger "unified redevelopment effort," which must be considered as one project. On November 18, 2015 this Commission

considered an application for a project at 424 Grand Blvd., an adjoining lot that is part of the same unified development as the one before you today. At that hearing, this Commission found there was “a failure to comply with the spirit of the Mello Act regarding the 6 lost units,” and that “the Director’s decision is inconsistent with the Settlement Agreement.”

Now we are back before this Commission with a Director’s determination that is no less inconsistent, as it once again fails to consider the total loss of 6 affordable units from the Venice community due to this same unified redevelopment effort. It is shocking and disturbing that the Director’s determination would go so far as to attempt to reverse, by fiat, the Commission’s earlier finding that has not been disturbed or overturned – especially given the current state of affordable housing in this City, where our elected officials are working hard to “stop the bleeding” of truly affordable housing to luxury housing developers. The hypocrisy from the planning department is unacceptable.

Second, the Staff Report constitutes collusion between the Applicant and the Department of City Planning to facilitate the piecemealing of the unified redevelopment effort at 416-428 Grand Blvd., in an effort to circumvent this Commission’s previous finding on the matter (see attached timeline showing the ongoing attempted piecemealing of the unified redevelopment effort). This is a new applicant in name, different from the one whose original application was considered part of the unified development, who was identified by this Commission in 2015. The previous applicant, Ralph Ziman, transferred the title to Xingyun, LLC on April 17, 2016, after the November 18, 2015 Commission hearing where a finding was made that this site was part of a unified redevelopment effort, and Ziman’s original application to demolish and redevelop this site was subsequently terminated.

Setting aside evidence that the conveyance of the property was not an arm’s length transaction between Mr. Ziman and Xingyun, LLC and thus appears to have been a subterfuge,<sup>1</sup> this new applicant was constructively on notice that this site was considered part of a unified redevelopment effort based on its contribution to the loss of 6 affordable units after that hearing. The Department of Planning should never have brought this “new” application that attempts to obscure, instead of address, this fact of the Commission’s finding as to the entire unified development at 416-428 Grand.

There is a strong parallel here to principles articulated in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), where the negative impacts of development must be mitigated. In the case of the Mello Act, the loss of affordable housing is one of the key impacts that must be addressed in development applications for projects in the coastal zone; the requirement to replace existing affordable housing units that are demolished *is the mitigation* required by the law.

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<sup>1</sup> See attached document demonstrating that Mr. Ziman was the financial surety on behalf of the entity named Xingyun LLC for the subject property well after the property was transferred.

CEQA prohibits project “piecemealing” – which is the attempt to make development impacts appear smaller than they are so as to avoid CEQA’s requirement that significant negative impacts be mitigated. Similarly, under the Mello Act, the agency cannot endorse piecemealing by claiming that only 2 affordable units have been demolished when in fact 6 have been demolished. The IAP is clear that when 6 units are being demolished, no feasibility study can be considered. A condition of approval must be the replacement of affordable housing on site, or offsite within the Coastal Zone.

Finally, should the Commission rely upon the feasibility study to deny the appeal, there would be a valid claim of legal error for an unfair hearing. (Cal. Code Civ. Proc., §1094.5(b).) As explained, you should not even be considering the feasibility study in this case at all. However, if you do, please take notice that my clients requested the 400 page study **over three months** ago.<sup>2</sup> They finally received it from the planning department on August 11<sup>th</sup>, **six days ago**. It is over 400 pages long, and while our expert economist is willing and able to review the feasibility study for accuracy, credibility and thoroughness, it is simply impossible for the expert economist to do so in such a short time period.

As such, it appears that the timing of the release of the feasibility study to appellants in this case was calculated to deprive my clients, the public, and this Commission, with substantial evidence as to the feasibility of replacing affordable units that have been demolished. Clearly, the Department of Planning had this study in its possession long before May 2020 when my clients requested it. Note that the “revised” study is dated January 2020 and the Department of Planning had given comments on the initial study in December of 2019. The Department “hid the ball” despite the fact the Department knew that my clients wished to review the feasibility study submitted to the Department by the applicant. While the Department of City Planning claims to have the expertise to govern the land use in this City and properly apply land use laws, staff has represented multiple times to this Commission that when it comes to Mello Act feasibility studies, they simply check for completeness, not accuracy or credibility. My clients’ expert will do the job the Department is unwilling or unable to do. But until that happens, this Commission will not have a full record before it in which to make a decision that relies on the Study.

For the foregoing reasons, we respectfully implore you to uphold the appeal and deny the application at this time.

Sincerely,



Sabrina Venskus

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<sup>2</sup> See attached email correspondence wherein Ms. Rudisill requested the Feasibility Study on May 1, 4, 5 and 6.

416-418-422-424-426-428 Grand Blvd Unified Development--Timeline

|                   |                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2012              | Ralph Ziman purchases the 416-418-422-424-426-428 Grand Blvd Unified Development                                                                                                       |
| June 27, 2013     | HCID issues Mello Determination for 416-418-422-424 Grand Blvd for four affordable units                                                                                               |
| December 12, 2013 | HCID issues Mello Determination for 426-428 Grand Blvd for two affordable units                                                                                                        |
| 2013-2014         | No fault, involuntary evictions of all tenants from <u>all 6 affordable units of the 416-418-422-424-426-428 Grand Blvd Unified Development</u>                                        |
| April 8-24, 2014  | Ralph Ziman demos two duplexes at 416-418-422-424 Grand                                                                                                                                |
| April 16, 2014    | Ralph Ziman files application for new SFD at 416 Grand (ZA-2014-1356-CDP)                                                                                                              |
| October 21, 2014  | Ralph Ziman files application for new SFD at 424 Grand (ZA-2014-3911-CDP)                                                                                                              |
| October 21, 2014  | Ralph Ziman files application for demo of existing duplex & new SFD on 2 lots at 426-428 Grand (ZA-2014-3906-CDP)                                                                      |
| January 13, 2015  | Ralph Ziman files application for 5,032 sf, 2 lot, 3-story new SFD at 418-422 Grand (ZA-2014-1358-CDP)                                                                                 |
| November 18, 2015 | <b>WLAAPC determination that <u>all 6 affordable units of the 416-418-422-424-426-428 Grand Blvd Unified Development</u> must be considered together for purposes of the Mello Act</b> |
| April 17, 2016    | Ralph Ziman transfer of 426-428 Grand to Xingyun LLC                                                                                                                                   |
| February 27, 2017 | After transfer to Xingyun LLC, the Ralph Ziman 426-428 Grand case is terminated (ZA-2014-3906-CDP)                                                                                     |
| March 15, 2018    | Xingyun LLC files application for demo of existing duplex at 426-428 Grand (DIR-2018-1485-CDP-MEL)                                                                                     |
| Date not avail    | Xingyun LLC files REVISED application for demo of existing duplex & new 3-story SFD over 2 lots, with ADU at 426-428 Grand (DIR-2018-1485-CDP-MEL)                                     |

4/15

1 Ralph Ziman  
2 438 Altair Pl.  
3 Venice, CA 90291

4 Maria Ziman  
5 438 Altair Pl.  
6 Venice, CA 90291

**FILED**  
Superior Court of California  
County of Los Angeles

APR 19 2018

Sherri R. Carigi, Executive Officer/Clerk:  
By Jennifer De Luna, Deputy

7 SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA  
8 COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES, CENTRAL DISTRICT

9  
10 ROBIN RUDISILL, an individual, et al;

11 Petitioners,

12 v.

13 CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION, et  
14 al;

15 Respondents.  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20

Case No.: BS 170185

**UNDERTAKING ON APPEAL**

Action Filed: July 11, 2017

Dept: 85

Judge: Hon. James C. Chalfant

Order/Judgment Entered: 1/30/2018

21 **TO ALL PARTIES AND THEIR ATTORNEYS OF RECORD:**

22 Whereas Real Party in Interest XINGYUN LLC desires to give an undertaking for appeal as  
23 provided by CCP 917.1; now therefore, the undersigned sureties, Ralph Ziman and Maria Ziman  
24 hereby obligate ourselves, to Petitioners Robin Rudisill, Lydia Ponce, Kevin Keresey, Teri  
25 Keresey, Kim Michalowski, Cela Williams, Jason Lord, under the statutory obligations, in the  
26 amount of \$28,800 dollars. (See attached Affidavits)  
27  
28

UNDERTAKING ON APPEAL

RECEIVED

APR 19 2018

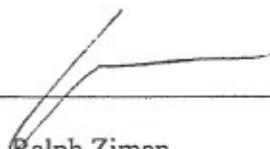
DEPT. 85

04/30/2018

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DATED: 4/18/18

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Ralph Ziman

DATED: 4/18/18

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Maria Ziman

Affidavit of Maria Ziman

My NAME is Maria Ziman aka Maria Greenshields

My occupation is arhst

My residence address is 438 Alhambra BL Venice CA 90291

My business address is (if any) N/A

I have personal knowledge of the facts stated in this declaration, except as to those matters stated on information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true. If called as a witness I could and would testify competently as to the truth of the matters stated herein.

I am a California resident. I am a householder within the state. My worth, in excess of all debts and liabilities, and exclusive of property exempt from the enforcement of a money judgment, exceeds the amount of the undertaking.

I own the following real and/or personal property situated in California:

Bank account at City National Bank.

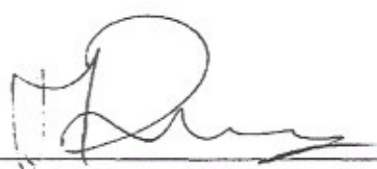
The nature of my interest in the City National Bank account is a joint account with my spouse.

The best estimate of the fair market value of said property is over \$28,800

Said property is subject to the following liens: none

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct. This declaration was executed on April 12, 2018, in Los Angeles, California.

Signed

By: 

MARIA ZIMAN

Affidavit of Ralph Ziman

My NAME is Ralph Ziman

My occupation is FILM MAKER

My residence address is 438 ALTAR PL VENICE 90291

My business address is (if any) 1880 CENTURY PK. E. SUITE 200, LA. 90067

I have personal knowledge of the facts stated in this declaration, except as to those matters stated on information and belief, and as to those matters, I believe them to be true. If called as a witness I could and would testify competently as to the truth of the matters stated herein.

I am a California resident. I am a householder within the state. My worth, in excess of all debts and liabilities, and exclusive of property exempt from the enforcement of a money judgment, exceeds the amount of the undertaking.

I own the following real and/or personal property situated in California:

Bank accounts at City National Bank and First Century Bank.

The nature of my interest in the City National Bank account is a joint account with my spouse.

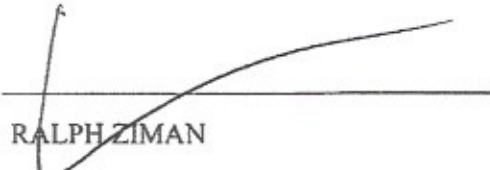
The best estimate of the fair market value of said property is over \$28,800

Said property is subject to the following liens: none

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct. This declaration was executed on April 12, 2018, in Los Angeles, California.

Signed

By:

  
RALPH ZIMAN

★ Robin Rudisill

Sent - ...obin Rudisill

May 4, 2020 at 1:35 PM

[Details](#)



Re: 426-428 Grand Blvd/DIR-2018-1485-CDP-MEL

To: Juliet Oh, Ira Brown, Cc: Amy Poyer, Bill Przylucki & 8 more

Hi Juliet,

We only have another day to write this appeal and are anxious to get the documents requested below.

Could you please tell me the status of getting them to us?

Meanwhile, can you please tell me whether the 3,977 square foot size of the new project includes the attached garage, as the description seems to be worded so as to exclude the square footage of the garage. Also, please confirm our assumption that the 860 square feet of the attached ADU is in addition to the 3,977 square feet for the single-family dwelling.

Thank you Juliet.

*For the Love of Los Angeles  
and our precious Coast,*  
Robin Rudisill  
(310) 721-2343

On May 1, 2020, at 6:04 PM, Robin Rudisill <[wildrudi@me.com](mailto:wildrudi@me.com)> wrote:

Hi Juliet and Ira,

First, I hope you're doing well!

We're preparing for the appeal of the 426-428 Grand Blvd determination and have some requests.

Since we don't have access to the case file, I'm writing to request the following documents:

Exhibit A to the determination

Historic Resources review – any reports or correspondence from OHR

Mello Feasibility study

We would appreciate having those documents asap as we are working towards the appeal deadline of May 6th. Please copy all when you send them.



Re: 426-428 Grand Blvd/DIR-2018-1485-CDP-MEL

To: Ira Brown, Cc: Juliet Oh, Amy Poyer, Bill Przylucki & 8 more

Hi Ira,

I appreciate the clarification.

Is it possible to extend the appeal deadline until a few days after the digital copy is made available?

If not, we'll file the appeal application tomorrow and reserve the right to provide supplemental information/justification after the appeal deadline, once we have access to the case file, including additional appeal points if needed.

Thank you...

*For the Love of Los Angeles  
and our precious Coast,*  
Robin Rudisill  
(310) 721-2343

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#### APPEAL JUSTIFICATION

May 6, 2020

426-428 Grand Blvd

DIR-2018-1485-CDP-MEL and ENV-2018-1486-CE

#### DUE PROCESS

The Appellants have been prejudiced because we were not given access to the entire record upon which to make our claims and case, as legally required, and therefore the Los Angeles Department of City Planning (DCP) has proceeded in violation of the law and we are not being given a fair process. Therefore, we specifically ask for relief in the form of a continuance of the appeal deadline so that we have the required opportunity to raise all issues in controversy.

On May 1, 2020 we requested a bare minimum list of documents that we needed in order to prepare our appeal, including Exhibit A to the determination, the Office of Historic Resources (OHR) review referred to on page 17 of the determination (including any reports or correspondence from the OHR) and the Mello Feasibility study. On May 5, 2020 we were provided with Exhibit A to the determination and told that we would have to request any other case file documents via a California Public Records Act request. This was further clarified by DCP Staff later that day that they will be preparing a digital copy of the case file, but that due to limited staff resources it could take 7 - 10 days to prepare. In other words, the materials would not be made available until after the appeal deadline.

The Appellants have therefore requested, in writing, that the deadline be pushed back to accommodate our right to review all germane materials.



James Williams &lt;james.k.williams@lacity.org&gt;

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## NEED TO CORRECT ERROR: 426-428 Grand/WLAAPC hearing August 19, 2020/Item 5.

2 messages

---

**Robin Rudisill** <wildrudi@icloud.com>

Fri, Aug 14, 2020 at 12:41 PM

To: James Williams &lt;james.k.williams@lacity.org&gt;, Planning APC West LA &lt;apcwestla@lacity.org&gt;

Cc: Bill Przylucki &lt;bill@power-la.org&gt;, Sue Kaplan &lt;sueakaplan@gmail.com&gt;, Sabrina Venskus &lt;venskus@lawsv.com&gt;, Amy Poyer &lt;amy.poyer@cwlc.org&gt;, Ira Brown &lt;ira.brown@lacity.org&gt;, Juliet Oh &lt;juliet.oh@lacity.org&gt;

Hi James,

We just noticed that Exhibit M to the POWER and Citizens Preserving Venice appeal was not correctly or completely included in the Staff Report for the Commissioners.

Can you please forward this to the Commissioners TODAY, including this note:

Commissioners,

Exhibit M to the 426-428 Grand Blvd appeal was not included correctly or completely in the Staff Report. It is a very important exhibit to the appeal.

Here is the correct Exhibit M and we hope you will review it carefully together with the applicable section of the Appeal Justification on page 3.

Thank you!

*For the Love of Los Angeles  
and our precious Coast,*  
Robin Rudisill  
(310) 721-2343

**426-428 Grand\_Exhibit M.pdf**

1806K

---

**James Williams** <james.k.williams@lacity.org>

Fri, Aug 14, 2020 at 12:51 PM

To: Robin Rudisill &lt;wildrudi@icloud.com&gt;

Cc: Bill Przylucki &lt;bill@power-la.org&gt;, Sue Kaplan &lt;sueakaplan@gmail.com&gt;, Sabrina Venskus &lt;venskus@lawsv.com&gt;, Amy Poyer &lt;amy.poyer@cwlc.org&gt;, Ira Brown &lt;ira.brown@lacity.org&gt;, Juliet Oh &lt;juliet.oh@lacity.org&gt;, Raoul Mendoza &lt;raoul.mendoza@lacity.org&gt;

Good day Robin,

We will share your submission.

Best regards,

James



**James K. Williams**  
**Commission Executive Assistant II**  
Cultural Heritage Commission  
West LA Area Planning Commission  
South Valley Area Planning Commission

[james.k.williams@lacity.org](mailto:james.k.williams@lacity.org)  
T: (213) 978-1295

**Los Angeles City Planning**  
200 N. Spring St., Room 272  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
[Planning4LA.org](http://Planning4LA.org)



[Quoted text hidden]

[Quoted text hidden]

*For the Love of Los Angeles  
and our precious Coast,*  
Robin Rudisill  
(310) 721-2343

# EXHIBIT M

**409 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**2 STORIES**

**1 UNIT**

**2,836 SQ FT**



**411 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**2 STORIES**

**1 UNIT**

**2,746 SQ FT**



**415 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1-STORY FRONT OF LOT, 2-STORY BACK OF LOT**

**1 UNIT**

**2,290 SQ FT**



**419 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**1 UNIT**

**1,368 SQ FT**



**421A, 421B, 421C GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**3 UNITS**

**1,095|SQ FT**

**CONTRIBUTOR TO THE LOST VENICE CANALS HISTORIC DISTRICT**



**423 & 423½ GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**2 STORIES**

**2 UNITS**

**1,674 SQ FT**



**425 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**1 UNIT**

**777 SQ FT**

**CONTRIBUTOR TO THE LOST VENICE CANALS HISTORIC DISTRICT**



**427 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**2 STORIES**

**1 UNIT**

**1,141 SQ FT**

**429 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**1 UNIT**

**858 SQ FT**



**431 & 431 ½ GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**2 UNITS**

**1,227 SQ FT**



**433 & 433 ½ GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**2 UNITS**

**1,143 SQ FT**



**435 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**2 STORIES**

**1 UNIT**

**1,525 SQ FT**



**439 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**1 UNIT**

**1,108 SQ FT**



**443A, 443B, 443C GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**3 UNITS**

**1,331 SQ FT**

**CONTRIBUTOR TO THE LOST VENICE CANALS HISTORIC DISTRICT**



**447 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**1 UNIT**

**1,296 SQ FT**

**CONTRIBUTOR TO THE LOST VENICE CANALS HISTORIC DISTRICT**



**404 GRAND BLVD**  
**3 STORIES**  
**1 UNIT**  
**3,089 SQ FT**



**406 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**3 STORIES**

**1 UNIT**

**3,100 SQ FT**



**408-410-414 GRAND BLVD**

**3 LOTS**

**2 STORIES**

**3 UNITS**

**3,362 SQ FT**



**416 GRAND BLVD**  
**1 LOT**  
**3 STORIES**  
**1 UNIT**  
**2,600 SQ FT**



**426-428 GRAND BLVD**

**2 LOTS**

**1 STORY**

**2 UNITS**

**1,473 SQ FT**



**430 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**1 STORY**

**1 UNIT**

**855 SQ FT**



**434 GRAND BLVD**

**1 LOT**

**3 STORIES**

**1 UNIT**

**2,526 SQ FT**



**1803 ANDALUSIA**

**2 LOTS**

**1 STORY FRONT, 2 STORY BACK**

**2 UNITS**

**1,473 SQ FT**





# Venice Neighborhood Council

PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294 / [www.VeniceNC.org](http://www.VeniceNC.org)  
Email: [info@VeniceNC.org](mailto:info@VeniceNC.org) / Phone or Fax: 310.606.2015



September 17, 2015

**BY EMAIL**

[david.weintraub@lacity.org](mailto:david.weintraub@lacity.org)

David Weintraub  
L.A. Department of City Planning  
200 N. Spring Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Project:**

424 Grand Blvd  
North Venice Subarea  
RD1.5-1-0 zone  
General Plan Land Use Plan designation: Multiple-Family Residential: Low Medium II

**Case Nos:**

ZA-2014-3911-CDP and ENV-2014-3912-MND  
VCZSP Compliance: DIR-2015-2972-MEL and DIR-2013-2910-VSO-MEL

**Project Description:** Mello Act Determination, construction of new 24'10" tall, 2-story, 1,462 sq ft SFD w/detached 420 sq ft garage on 2,250 sq ft lot. Lot 9/424 Grand Blvd. is part of a Unified Development consisting of 6 lots (lots 6-11), from 416 Grand through 428 Grand Blvd.

Dear David,

Please be advised that at a regularly held public meeting of the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) Board of Officers on September 15, 2015, the following Motions were approved by a vote of 12-0-2:

**MOTION:**

The VNC Board *recommends denial* of the project as presented, as a separate project.

**MOTION:**

The VNC Board recommends that all 6 lots of the Unified Development – 416, 418, 422, 424, 426, and 428 Grand Blvd, which includes 424 Grand Blvd., be considered together for purposes of determining Mello Act Affordable Replacement Units and feasibility study, if required, and that all four factors be considered in any such feasibility study, if required, including the economic, social, environmental and technical factors.

Please note that the VNC Board does not speak on behalf of the City of L.A. but only on behalf of the community of Venice, which elected the Board members; and that the advisory recommendation contained in this letter does not purport to take any action that may be required under applicable law by the Venice Coastal Zone Specific Plan, the L.A. Municipal Code, the Venice Land Use Plan or the California Coastal Act.



# Venice Neighborhood Council

PO Box 550, Venice, CA 90294 / [www.VeniceNC.org](http://www.VeniceNC.org)  
Email: [info@VeniceNC.org](mailto:info@VeniceNC.org) / Phone or Fax: 310.606.2015



Please *provide us a copy of the determination letter, **including all Exhibits***, via email to [president@venicenc.org](mailto:president@venicenc.org), [vicepresident@venicenc.org](mailto:vicepresident@venicenc.org), and [chair-lupc@venicenc.org](mailto:chair-lupc@venicenc.org), in addition to mailing it to the VNC at the address indicated in the letterhead above; and please *assure that this letter from the VNC is placed in ALL City case files for the project, including the files for Appeals, if any.*

Thank you, and please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions in this regard.

Yours truly,

**Mike Newhouse**  
**President**  
**Venice Neighborhood Council**

**CC:**

**L.A. Department of City Planning:**

Michael LoGrande: [michael.logrande@lacity.org](mailto:michael.logrande@lacity.org)

Lisa Webber: [lisa.webber@lacity.org](mailto:lisa.webber@lacity.org)

Faisal Roble: [faisal.roble@lacity.org](mailto:faisal.roble@lacity.org)

Linn Wyatt: [linn.wyatt@lacity.org](mailto:linn.wyatt@lacity.org)

Kevin Jones: [kevin.jones@lacity.org](mailto:kevin.jones@lacity.org)

Commission Executive Assistant: [APCWestLA@lacity.org](mailto:APCWestLA@lacity.org)

**California Coastal Commission:**

Charles Lester: [charles.lester@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:charles.lester@coastal.ca.gov)

Jack Ainsworth: [john.ainsworth@coastal.ca.gov](mailto:john.ainsworth@coastal.ca.gov)

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**Council District 11:**

Councilmember Mike Bonin: [mike.bonin@lacity.org](mailto:mike.bonin@lacity.org)

Tricia Keane: [tricia.keane@lacity.org](mailto:tricia.keane@lacity.org)

Chris Robertson: [chris.robertson@lacity.org](mailto:chris.robertson@lacity.org)

Debbie Dyner Harris: [debbie.dynerharris@lacity.org](mailto:debbie.dynerharris@lacity.org)

Chuy Orozco: [jesus.d.orozco@lacity.org](mailto:jesus.d.orozco@lacity.org)

**Venice Neighborhood Council:**

Venice Neighborhood Council: [board@venicenc.org](mailto:board@venicenc.org)

Land Use & Planning Committee: [LUPC@venicenc.org](mailto:LUPC@venicenc.org)

**Applicant:**

Robert Thibodeau: [robert@duarchitects.com](mailto:robert@duarchitects.com)

## Common Law Conflict of Interest Rules

Although Los Angeles City Charter § 222, contains its own conflict of interest provisions based on an "appearance standard," these standards for disqualification are not applicable to neighborhood council board members. However, neighborhood councils are free to develop their own appearance standards and ethics rules in their bylaws.

Furthermore, basic principles of bias and conflict of interest rules that the courts have developed over time (common law) also apply to your decisions even if the statutory rules may allow you to participate in an action. As the Attorney General has concluded, "[t]he common law doctrine against conflicts of interest . . . prohibit public officials from placing themselves in a position where their private, personal interests may conflict with their official duties." 64 Ops. Cal. Atty Gen 795. As put by the court of appeal, "[a] public officer is impliedly bound to exercise the powers conferred on him with diligence and primarily for the benefit of the public." *Noble c. City of Palo Alto* (1928) 89 Cal. App. 47, 51.

This doctrine applies in situations involving both financial *and* nonfinancial interests. This means that simply having a personal relation to the matter could be construed as tainting your decision-making because you are perceived to be biased or making the decision based on your personal interest, rather than for the good of the public. Thus, you should always be alert to whether your private interests, whether financial or otherwise, would be enhanced by any particular action you take on an item before you.

**Congress of Neighborhoods**  
**Office of the City Attorney - Neighborhood Council Advice Division**

**STATE AND CITY CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAWS:  
INFORMATION FOR BOARD MEMBERS OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS**

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Planning APC West LA <apcwestla@lacity.org>

## 426-428 Grand/WLAAPC hearing August 19/Item 5.

1 message

Robin Rudisill <willdrudi@icloud.com>

Fri, Aug 14, 2020 at 6:39 PM

To: James Williams <james.k.williams@lacity.org>, Planning APC West LA <apcwestla@lacity.org>

Cc: Bill Przylucki <bill@power-la.org>, Sue Kaplan <sueakaplan@gmail.com>, Sabrina Venskus <venskus@lawsv.com>, Amy Poyer <amy.poyer@cwlc.org>, Amanda Seward <amandaseward@artvista.net>

Hi James,

**The Appellants request** that Commissioner Newhouse recuse himself from the [426-428 Grand Blvd](#) hearing on August 19th. In the past he has recused when he was a part of the Venice Neighborhood Council (VNC) Board when a project was heard there. He was President of the VNC in 2015 when [424 Grand Blvd](#), specifically noted as part of the 416-418-422-[424-426-428 Grand Blvd](#) Unified Development, was heard. See attached September 17, 2015 letter from VNC President Mike Newhouse:

There's also a concern that Commissioner Newhouse may have interests within 500 feet of the project and/or a relationship with any of the applicant team or related parties, as "common law conflict of interest rules" apply even when there is a non-financial personal relation (**as the decision maker could at least be perceived to be biased**). See attached from the Office of the City Attorney:

Page 5:

We assume he will be recusing consistent with past hearings, but could you please confirm this?

Thank you.

*For the Love of Los Angeles  
and our precious Coast,*  
Robin Rudisill  
(310) 721-2343

### 3 attachments

Congress of Neighborhoods  
Office of the City Attorney - Neighborhood Council Advice Division  
STATE AND CITY CONFLICT OF INTEREST LAWS:  
INFORMATION FOR BOARD MEMBERS OF NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

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#### Common Law Conflict of Interest Rules

Although Los Angeles City Charter § 222 contains its own conflict of interest provisions based on an "appearance standard," these standards for disqualification are not applicable to neighborhood council board members. However, neighborhood councils are free to develop their own appearance standards and ethics rules in their bylaws.

Furthermore, basic principles of bias and conflict of interest rules that the courts have developed over time (common law) also apply to your decisions even if the statutory rules may allow you to participate in an action. As the Attorney General has concluded, "[t]he common law doctrine against conflicts of interest...prohibits public officials from placing themselves in a position where their private, personal interests may conflict with their official duties." 64 Ops. Cal. Atty. Gen. 215. As put by the court of appeals, "[a] public officer is implicitly bound to exercise the powers conferred on him with diligence and primarily for the benefit of the public." *Stabile v. City of Palmdale* (1993) 89 Cal. App. 4th 51.

This doctrine applies in situations involving both financial and nonfinancial interests. This means that simply having a personal relation to the matter could be construed as forming your decision-making because you are perceived to be biased or making the decision based on your personal interest, rather than for the good of the public. Thus, you should always be alert to whether your private interests, whether financial or otherwise, would be enhanced by any particular action you take on or from before you.

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State and City Conflict of Interest Laws  
Congress of Neighborhoods

Page 5  
(Printed 8/14)



EX B--VNC\_letter\_424\_Grand\_September17,2015.pdf  
185K



# **DAY OF HEARING SUBMISSIONS**



James Williams &lt;james.k.williams@lacity.org&gt;

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**DIR-2018-1485-CDP-MEL-1A (426-428 Grand Blvd.) Hearing Submission**1 message

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**Yasmin Tong** <Yasmin@ctyhousing.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 6:14 AM

To: "apcwestla@lacity.org" &lt;apcwestla@lacity.org&gt;, "james.k.williams@lacity.org" &lt;james.k.williams@lacity.org&gt;, "bill@power-la.org" &lt;bill@power-la.org&gt;

Dear West LA Area Planning Commission:

As a professional with the requisite expertise to review a feasibility study for the purposes of a Mello Act review, I was asked by POWER to review the feasibility study for this hearing shortly after they were able to get possession of the study for review last week. It is our understanding that the Department of City Planning only released the study for review by POWER or the community on August 11th, and that the study is over 400 pages long.

Eight days is simply not enough time for me, or any other expert working on a pro-bono basis to ensure the community is being treated fairly in the land use process. I cannot make any authoritative claims about the quality of this study. If the Department of City Planning has not independently verified the assumptions and conclusions made in this study using a reputable, neutral 3rd party, given that they have also not provided adequate time for public review, I do not believe this study could possibly be the basis for a finding that replacement of affordable housing is infeasible.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Yasmin Tong  
CTY Housing  
310/581-3631



James Williams &lt;james.k.williams@lacity.org&gt;

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**DIR-2018-1485-CDP-MEL-1A (426-428 Grand Blvd.) Hearing Submission**

1 message

**Kevin Keresey** <kkeresey7@gmail.com>

Wed, Aug 19, 2020 at 10:29 AM

Reply-To: kkeresey7@gmail.com

To: apcwestla@lacity.org, james.k.williams@lacity.org

**Commissioners,**

**My name is Kevin Keresey. I am one of the Appellants. I cannot be at the hearing today so I am writing to implore you to work hard to understand the overall subterfuge by Ralph Ziman and his investor group and related party Xingyun.**

**From Day 1 they have been trying to piece meal and work around the great laws of our land, the Coastal Act and the Mello Act, to evade the requirements of replacing the existing affordable housing.**

**My wife and I are among the tenants that Ziman originally evicted.**

**The three duplexes on the six Ziman lots constituted a Unified Development. I hope you read all of the tenant Declarations in the Exhibits to the appeal with testimony and proof that the three duplexes clearly met the definition of a Unified Development, and thus should be looked at as one project in determining whether the affordable units should be replaced.**

**I pray that you will bring Justice for the people of Venice today.**

**Sincerely,**

**Kevin Keresey**

Virus-free. [www.avast.com](http://www.avast.com)

Obviously Venice has changed dramatically in the past decade. There are many opinions about what has happened in this community. This is an attempt to bring public awareness to the practices of Developers coming into the Venice community. We know what these developers do because it happened to us while we were citizens of this community.

Besides using an unclosed loophole in The Ellis Act to wrongfully evict tenants....

The developer/owner refuses to identify themselves to the tenants & the Realtor refuses to give tenants the name and contact info of the new owner. The tenants that have been living there for, in our case 20 years, now have no idea who the owner is or how to get a hold of their landlord.

They serve tenants with Pay or Quit eviction notices when the tenants have paid their rent in full & on time. When tenants prove to the Developer/owner that they've paid the rent in full & on time and ask the developer/owner to put in writing that the eviction notice was their "mistake", they refuse. They do this to create a paper trail to try and paint the tenant as a low life squatter that deserves to be evicted.

The water company comes to shut the tenants water off because the developer/owner did not pay the water bill. The water man tells the tenant that only the building's owner can turn the water on and off. But the tenant doesn't know who the owner is, so again the tenant calls the realtor but the realtor still won't tell the tenant who the owner is.

They intimidate women.

They stop the gardening & building maintenance. (the property starts to look uninhabited and becomes unsafe)

They destroy buildings without the legal permits to do so.

They use lies and deception to get out of complying with the Mello Act Govt. Code 65590 which protects affordable housing in the California Coast.

They send their lawyers and paid/coached witnesses to tell blatant lies in front of the housing commission at public hearings.

These illegal practices are commonplace and have been going on unchecked for a decade or more and will continue to go on because there are no consequences. Our community has been gangstered by developers and it appears that our elected officials do not care, they may even be benefitting. We have made numerous attempts to communicate our concerns to your councilman Mike Bonin. These concerns have fallen on deaf ears. No response. Since our forced departure from the Venice community 18 months ago we have been contacted by many

other tenants in Venice that are going through the exact same thing. All of them are asking, "What do we do?"

#### A Question for Tammy Pardee

Why was it when your client, Ralph Ziman, bought the properties on Grand Blvd in Venice you refused to reveal his name to the 12 rent paying Tenants living in his 3 duplexes. Ralph Ziman and his private equity firm bought those properties and never identified himself. When the tenants of Grand blvd made repeated calls to your office to find out the name and contact information of our new landlord, we were repeatedly denied. Why did your office deny us the name and number of our new landlord? Even after calling many times and saying, "none of us even know where to send the rent, where do we send the rent?", we were still denied. Why?

The water department came to turn off the water in our buildings. I asked the water man, why? He said the owner had not paid the bill. I said I would pay the bill to keep the water on. He said, "only the owner can turn the water on or off." I asked him to make an exception because we didn't know who the new owner was. He said he could not do that. I then called your office again and said that I needed the name and phone number of our landlord immediately so that he can pay the bill and we can have water. The amazing response from your office was, "We'll get a hold of him and he'll call you" I asked when. Your office had no response. I had to tell the woman on the phone (possibly you), "Then I will have to come down to the office and wait until you give me the number because there are 12 rent paying citizens here that are about to be without water." The woman still wouldn't give me the

number saying she didn't have it and that she'd have to call me back. You/she/whoever outright refused to ever give us his name or number!

Why would it be the policy of your office to withhold the name and contact information of the owner/landlord from tenants?

The reasons for your office's actions seem crystal clear to me. But instead of making assumptions and accusations we would like to hear directly from you as to why.

## Concerned Citizen

To Garcetti & Bonin

Letter to Mayor Garcetti & Councilman Mike Bonin:

Mayor Garcetti and Councilman Mike Bonin,

It is time to step in and represent the people that elected you. You are allowing Venice to be destroyed by developers! You are allowing Developers to use a loophole in The ELLIS ACT that should have been closed. You are allowing developers to give fake eviction notices. You are allowing Developers to buy properties in Venice and not identify who they are to the tenants. You are allowing them to turn the water off in buildings that people are legally living in and paying rent. You are allowing them to stop the building maintenance. You are allowing them to intimidate women. You are allowing them to come to open public hearings in front of a commission and lie without any consequence! You are allowing them to destroy buildings without a permit! THESE ARE FACTS. All of these things and more have happened to my wife and I as well as hundreds of others! WHY WON'T YOU LISTEN!?!

You work for the people that elected you and the community as a whole! You are not representing us! (Sending an intern down to a fraudulent hearing is not representing us!) we demand a meeting with you and we demand that you attend the next public hearing. We demand that you address the crimes that have been perpetrated by these developers. WE HAVE THE PROOF. WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO LISTEN TO US!?!

The citizens want a sit down meeting. YES OR NO? Please hit REPLY ALL with your response.

Very Sincerely,

Kevin Keresey

(On behalf of a huge number of people that are going through this)

Subject: Gentrification Conversation

Hi Sandy,

I saw your article in the LA Times "Opening up in a "Gentrification Conversation" and wanted to make a few comments. I have never written or emailed a newspaper before but this topic is very important to me. I am 57 years old. The three places I have lived in my life (New York, San Francisco, Venice) have been completely destroyed by gentrification. Sadly, I believe it is too late for the "Gentrification Conversation". Money is the power that runs and controls our society. This is an absolute fact. You mentioned in your article that Alfredo Resendiz looked around and thought, "there are a lot of white people in this place". Then, you wrote, "It was an observation, not a complaint". I don't know if Alfredo is a renter or if he owns a house, but I do believe that if he is a renter his days are numbered. After he sees the way he is treated it will no longer be an observation. I hope this doesn't happen to him but I have seen how this works. Here is my experience:

My wife and I lived in a duplex at 418 Grand Blvd, Venice, CA 90291 for 20 years. We lived along side 2 other duplexes owned by the same landlord. These 3 duplexes housed 12 adults, one child. We all lived there as a very tight knit community/family. We have all been kicked out. Here is how it went down:

We were told by our landlord that the 3 duplexes were being sold & that we would have to move out. Despite the fact that this was a major bummer as we loved our community, we decided that we would go gracefully and cooperate fully. We could not afford to buy the place. We already knew that all of the properties in Venice were going for cash. People with a bank loan do not stand a chance against cash buyers so therefore only the wealthy will end up with property nowadays. What happens is you get Private Equity Firms buying up all of these properties. They have investors that will probably never even see Venice! Nothing we could do about it though. I'm sure you have heard of the Ellis Evictions. This law came to be because an older gentleman in his 80s that owned an apartment building told his tenants that he didn't want to hassle with the maintenance, the rent, etc...He wanted to retire & he wanted everybody out so that he could sell the building. Well, the law said that he couldn't do that, so he took it to the Supreme Court. The supreme court ruled that if he wants to retire and go out of business, he has every right to do so. Hence the Ellis Eviction rule. This Ellis Eviction was designed for people that were going out of business forever (that is my understanding from reading it)! It was not designed for Real Estate Moguls and greedy developers to massacre communities which is exactly what is happening! Again, we have a huge loophole that allows the rich to do anything that they want to do. We have a lot of pretend laws that give the appearance of fairness in this scam. I say take the pretend laws off the books. If our society allows this, why pretend that tenants have rights? The illusion of rights is what it is. It is a charade! I would like to note that I have nothing against the wealthy but being wealthy should never give you license to make the rules, bend the rules, have more power. But it does. Even though I disagree with these fake laws & rules, they are still the laws and rules and we abided by them. They are the criminals, not us!

Here is how our eviction went down:

The 3 duplexes were sold almost immediately by our landlord to the Private Equity firm headed by \*\*\*\* and the law offices of \_\_\_\_\_. There were 2 real estate companies and our Landlord involved in the sale. None of them would tell us who the building was sold to, who the new owner was, where to send the rent, etc...They told us that the new owner would be contacting us. Well, that never happened. We made repeated calls to the real estate brokers and our ex landlord asking who the new owner was. For some reason they would not tell us! (this is illegal)

Next, the water company came to turn the water off for the 3 duplexes. The water company man told me that only the owner can turn the water on or off and that the old owner had turned it off. So I was forced to call the real estate offices and demand the new owner's name and phone number or our water was being turned off in 24 hours. They gave it to me reluctantly. I called \_\_\_\_\_. He apologized, said it was all a big mistake, that he would be coming over to introduce himself to everybody (never happened, none of the tenants ever met him). Had I allowed the water to have been turned off it would have been bad news for \_\_\_\_\_. But we weren't trying to bring bad news to \_\_\_\_\_, we just wanted our water!

Next, my wife and I were eating dinner at 6pm on a Friday evening when there was a knock at the door. A process server served my wife and I with a "3 Day Notice to Pay Rent or Quit". We have never been late on our rent once! In fact we are always early. This was terrible, to feel like you're being threatened in what is still your legal residence. To be threatened at a place that you've lived for 20 years and consider home when you've never been late on the rent once is a major bummer! And I'm not one that is easily shaken. \_\_\_\_\_ deliberately gave me the wrong address to send the rent to. When I received my rent check back in the mail with "return to sender, wrong address" stamped on the envelope, I compared the address on the envelope with the address that \_\_\_\_\_ gave me in an email that I saved. I sent the check to the address he gave me! I showed proof of this to his lawyer and asked him to please write me a brief note acknowledging that this

"3 Day Notice to Pay Rent or Quit" was a mistake. They would not do it. They were trying to create a paper trail against us. We were not trying to accumulate \_\_\_\_\_ transgressions to use against him, we just wanted to live in peace until we were legally supposed to move! He was trying to accumulate false accusations against us for absolutely no reason!

From then on, we delivered the rent in person to the law offices of \_\_\_\_\_. When I would bring the rent check I would have to wait 15 minutes for a receipt. When my wife would bring the check they would say things to her like, "Why don't you just move?, What's your problem?...." I don't get it.

Once they bought the buildings, they dropped the gardener and building maintenance. They treated us like squatters (while we were paying rent, doing everything legally, cooperating)...

Getting our deposit back was another hassle. They tried to screw us, nickel & dime us at every opportunity. One of his lawyers phoned ----- in South Africa to okay our deposit return (while my wife and I were standing there). This is what we heard of the call, "I can't hear you Ralph, are you on your boat?, what?...oh, you're flying your plane... no, it's nothing urgent..."

After living at 418 Grand Blvd for 20 years, it was not only horrible to have to move out of our tightly knit family like community, but it was especially despicable the way the Private Equity firm headed by ----- and the law offices of ----- treated us. We totally understood that by the "law" of this misused ELLIS ACT that there was no way around moving. We complied with everything! Always paid rent on time! On top of the tragedy of breaking up a long standing community of people that lived together as close friends & family for many years, they treated us all terribly! We are all working class folks that were kicked out by a developer that has bought up and destroyed as much property as he possibly can on Grand Blvd. Just take a drive down there and look, it is ugly! -----, his private equity firm, and his lawyers could not have been more hostile in the process. We were debris to them. They made that very clear. We were kept in the dark on everything, given conflicting dates about when we were supposed to move, lied to over and over again about everything. We were treated like criminals or squatters while we were paying our rent and living there legally while they awaited a permit to destroy. The time that we LEGALLY lived there after ----- and company bought our place was a completely negative nightmare for both my wife and I, a real dark point in our lives. We complied 100%, they were hostile in too many ways to even remember now. I threw away all paperwork, all notes I took, all letters, deleted all emails concerning this after we relocated. We didn't want anything that had to do with that nightmare anymore. It was such an unjust use of the Ellis law. Sadly it's happening everywhere. We were all driven out by developers that don't care about Venice at all. I would also like to add that none of the people that lived in those duplexes was able to relocate in Venice because of insane rental prices. 13 people were kicked out of the 3 duplexes so that a developer could build a one family house with a pool...

Over the past year and a half I had been receiving periodic calls from people in our old neighborhood saying that ----- had done/ is doing a bunch of illegal stuff in his pursuit of Grand Blvd. I also received calls from tenants elsewhere in Venice that were getting kicked out by different landlords and developers. Each time I got one of these calls I felt the burn of powerlessness. Then I started receiving calls from Robin Rudisill, the chair of the land use and planning committee in Venice. She had filed an appeal on behalf of those (without us even knowing, she's awesome) that lived in those duplexes and other residents in Venice and wanted us to come testify in front of the West Los Angeles Area Planning Commission on March 4, 2015, which we did. The case was a "Mello Act Director's Determination"

This hearing that started at 4:30pm and ended 4 1/2 hours later at 9pm was nothing but a surreal staged play. When my wife and I arrived there was a man coaching a bunch of witnesses against us in the hallway. Later when he got up to speak he passed himself off as a genius architect, with 8 published papers at Berkeley, an expert in all of this, who just happens to be a concerned citizen of Venice, and thinks that these buildings are so wonderful and appropriate for the neighborhood...It turns out that this guy who passed himself off as a citizen of Venice is the Architect and project manager on all of -----

other projects in Venice! This guy gave fake witnesses coaching on how to lie against us, he works for ---- and pretended to be a concerned citizen! There are no oaths to tell the truth at this public hearing. When attorney ----- addressed the committee he told so many wild lies it was truly amazing. He just made up anything! When it was my turn to speak I confronted ----- on his lies and demanded that he bring the paperwork to support his lies. I also said that it would be impossible for him to come forward with any paperwork because it's all lies. I told the Commission that my wife and I had nothing whatsoever to personally gain from this hearing as we know that the Mello act will not be enforced, that money and developers would rule the day. And of course that's what happened. We were ruled against. There is no fact checking of lies at these hearings. It is such a scam! Even though the Commissioners themselves kept bringing up that ----- wrongfully demolished these duplexes before they were permitted to do so, did not stop them from ruling against us...There was so many lies told at that hearing it would be impossible to list them. Thankfully it was all recorded by Robin. I have heard from Robin that there will be an appeal and a lawsuit. I will speak and/or testify to get things on the record but I have zero faith in the system to work. MONEY rules!!!

This hearing involved 4 commissioners, their secretaries, assistants. Several City Attorneys with all of their assistants. Several Sheriffs are on duty there too. All of those people are getting paid by the taxpayers to provide the false appearance of due process. That's a lot of money for an illusion. It is completely obvious that the City Attorney's office is 100% with the developer. ----- was passing them notes the entire hearing. Of course the city attorney's office wants them to win, the city needs the money! There was one extremely intelligent commissioner, Esther Margulies (sp?), that seemed determined to get to the bottom of this and kept asking really important questions. She was the only one advocating for us (we do not know her), the only one that voted in our favor. The other commissioners all seemed concerned but were heavily pressured by the city attorney's office to make a decision in -----'s favor that night.

Thankfully it was all recorded by Robin. I have heard from Robin that there will be an appeal and a lawsuit. I will speak and/or testify to get things on the record but I have zero faith in the system to work fairly. It just doesn't work that way when people are greedy and there's money to be had.

It would be great to stop any further damage. But honestly, The New York, San Francisco, Venice that I knew and loved are long gone. Total gentrification. The life is gone. The neighborhoods are gone. The ethnic diversity is gone. Everything that I loved about those places is going or gone. It is disgusting, it is wrong. It destroys society. The laws have been written and executed to favor the elite rich.

There's my long winded 2 cents. Thank you so much for writing the article. I hope as a journalist that you stay on this. You may have the power to make a difference!

PS This story is in no way unique to the Residents of Grand Blvd that were ousted. This is a typical story. I am not singling out our situation as being something special that deserves extra attention. IT IS EVERYWHERE.



To whom it may concern:

This is a statement from Kevin & Teri Keresey, prior tenants at 418 Grand Blvd, Venice CA 90291:

After living at 418 Grand Blvd for 20 years, it was not only horrible to have to move out of our tightly knit family like community, but it was especially despicable the way the Private Equity firm headed by Ralph Ziman and the law offices of Rosario Perry treated us. The previous owner & the two different real estate companies involved in the sale refused to give us the name of the new owner/buyer. The water company came to turn off the water in our building. The water co. told me that "only the owner can turn the water on or off. The previous owner has turned the water off." He gave me 24 hours. After an afternoon of calling our ex landlord, the 2 real estate companies I was finally able to get a hold of Ralph Ziman and have him transfer the water to his name. Next came a notice from a process server telling us to "Pay Rent or Quit". When I got a hold of Ralph Ziman, because I had proof that we had paid the rent, and he acknowledged that it was a "mistake", I asked him to please put that in writing so as not to have a "Pay Rent or Quit" notice on our record. He refused. We have never been late on our rent at 418 Grand Blvd before Ralph Ziman bought our building or after. From that time on we delivered the rent in person to Rosario Perry Law Offices and obtained written receipts so as to not receive another fraudulent notice. Every time my wife Teri went in to pay the rent she was harangued by the employees there with nasty remarks, "Why don't you just move..." on and on and on. We totally understood that by the "law" of this misused ELLIS ACT that there was no way around moving. We complied with everything! Always paid rent on time! They harassed us constantly, dropped the gardener, provided no building maintenance. On top of the tragedy of breaking up a long standing community of people that lived together as close friends & family for many years, they treated us all terribly! I believe that Angelina, Troy, Jason, Kim, Loren, Lisa, Gretchen, Dicky will all confirm that to be true! We are all working class folks that were kicked out by a developer that has bought up and destroyed as much property as he possibly can on Grand Blvd. Just take a drive down there and look, it is ugly! Ralph Ziman, his private equity firm, and his lawyers could not have been more hostile in the process. We were debris to them. They made that very clear. We were kept in the dark on everything, given conflicting dates about when we were supposed to move, lied to over and over again about everything. We were treated like criminals or squatters while we were paying our rent and living there legally while they awaited a permit to destroy. The time that we LEGALLY lived there after Ralph Ziman and company bought our place was a completely negative nightmare for both my wife and I, a real dark point in our lives. We complied 100%, they were hostile in too many ways to even remember now. I threw away all paperwork, all notes I took, all letters, deleted all emails concerning this after we relocated. We didn't want anything that had to do with that nightmare anymore. It was such an unjust use of the Ellis law. Sadly it's happening everywhere.

On top of that it was 100% financially impossible for us to remain in our Venice neighborhood. It took more than 6 months to find a place that we could afford anywhere! I know for a fact that none of the people 8 people above could afford to stay in Venice either. We were all driven out by developers that don't care about Venice at all.

These are investment properties to them. To us, they were our homes. I have read the ELLIS law in it's entirety. I believe that anybody who reads it will find that it is being primarily used as a loophole to kick people out of their homes and gentrify our once wonderfully diverse neighborhoods. Sadly it's happening everywhere. If what they did to our community, and the way they did it is legal, then it's a sad day for sure. They appear to have gotten away with destroying our community.

Sincerely,

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