From:	Board of Supervisors, (BOS)
To:	Major, Erica (BOS)
Subject:	FW: Proposed change to Demolition Language
Date:	Monday, May 11, 2020 12:39:06 PM
Importance:	High

Erica,

I believe this is for File No. 200142.

Jackie Hickey
Board of Supervisors
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place, City Hall, Room 244
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689
Phone: (415) 554-5184 | Direct: (415) 554-7701
jacqueline.hickey@sfgov.org | www.sfbos.org

From: Serina Calhoun <serina@sync-arch.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 7, 2020 2:08 PM
To: Board of Supervisors, (BOS) <board.of.supervisors@sfgov.org>; Haney, Matt (BOS) <matt.haney@sfgov.org>; MandelmanStaff, [BOS] <mandelmanstaff@sfgov.org>; Mar, Gordon (BOS) <gordon.mar@sfgov.org>; Peskin, Aaron (BOS) <aaron.peskin@sfgov.org>; Preston, Dean (BOS) <dean.preston@sfgov.org>; Fewer, Sandra (BOS) <sandra.fewer@sfgov.org>; Ronen, Hillary <hillary.ronen@sfgov.org>; Safai, Ahsha (BOS) <ahsha.safai@sfgov.org>; Stefani, Catherine (BOS) <catherine.stefani@sfgov.org>; Walton, Shamann (BOS) <shamann.walton@sfgov.org>; Yee, Norman (BOS) <norman.yee@sfgov.org>; Koppel, Joel (CPC) <joel.koppel@sfgov.org>; Moore, Kathrin (CPC) <kathrin.moore@sfgov.org>; Diamond, Susan (CPC) <sue.diamond@sfgov.org>; Fung, Frank (CPC) <frank.fung@sfgov.org>; Imperial, Theresa (CPC) <theresa.imperial@sfgov.org>; Johnson, Milicent (CPC) <milicent.johnson@sfgov.org>; Ionin, Jonas (CPC) <jonas.ionin@sfgov.org>; CPC-Commissions Secretary <commissions.secretary@sfgov.org>
Cc: Hillis, Rich (CPC) <rich.hillis@sfgov.org>
Subject: Proposed change to Demolition Language
Importance: High

> This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

Good afternoon,

I am a local architect with a small office in Hayes Valley. I am writing today in STRONG OPPOSITION to the proposed changes to SF Planning Code 317 as introduced by Supervisors Mandelman and Peskin. I believe the intent of this legislation is to prevent historic resources from being demolished by a few “bad actors” who lie on their permit applications like what happed with the Neutra house. I support that intent but, my feelings about this legislation are the same as those for Supervisor

Peskin's legislation from last year. This is not the way to achieve that goal.

On average, my residential clients already spend 2-5 years going through their permit process on a conforming addition. Recently, one of my clients spent 5 years waiting for their code compliant vertical addition to be approved. That project didn't even require a hearing. When they started they had a 1-story, 1-bedroom unit and were pregnant with their first child. A child they had no bedroom for. In the span of their 5 year process, they had a child, sent that child to school, their marriage failed, and they filed for divorce. That's a snapshot of how people's lives can change during the lengthy and arduous permit process. In that same span, construction costs have more than doubled, placing their project even further out of reach. Let me dispel a mis-conception. My clients are not rich. They are small families having their first child, or having an elderly parent move in with them and they need more space. I can't tell you how many clients come to me, already pregnant with their first child, needing an addition so they have a room their baby. Unfortunately, that baby will be walking and talking before their code compliant addition will be approved and that's what I have to tell them each and every time they call me. It's heartbreaking, to be honest.

This legislation will make an already arduous, and time consuming process, much worse, not to mention much more costly. We need legislation that does the opposite – that makes it easier to modify our homes and businesses. Maybe people wouldn't lie on their permit applications if the process was simpler and faster. Maybe there wouldn't be so many vacant storefronts if it didn't take 6-9 months to get a permit for a commercial space. This proposal makes it worse, not better, across the board.

Now, due to the shut-down, the single family home renovation, addition, and new construction projects have almost entirely been put on hold as homeowners struggle to pay their mortgages and worry for their future. In just the first week of the shut-down, my architectural colleagues, and many contractors across the city were forced to lay off their entire staff and, in many cases, close their firms forever. They all specialized in single family home projects. The market evaporated overnight. This legislation was introduced prior to the shut-down and with positive intent, but now, more than ever, we need single family residential projects to be as easy to achieve as possible. We're facing a new work model – one where people stay home with their kids and partners. I expect that those people will need more space. Space for a dedicated home office, or private space in their home to separate themselves from the rest of their family. How will they do that if it now takes 3+ years to do a vertical or horizontal addition to their home.

My strong suggestion to solving the problem of people lying on their permit applications is simple – introduce legislation that requires a building inspection prior to start of construction. The City of Oakland does that and it's very successful. I also support penalties for people caught lying on their applications or exceeding the scope of their permit without additional inspection oversight. Bad actors should pay the price, but not the vast majority of homeowners who just need space to meet the needs of their families.

I appreciate your thoughtfulness on this important issue.

Thank you,

Serina Calhoun
Principal Architect
syncopated architecture
415-558-9843

Placemakers PRO is dedicated to helping you provide higher quality service to your clients AND save time while you're doing it! Try out our time saving Property Information Map! And, please follow us on LinkedIN to stay updated!

-