



Sukow Engineering

Surveying • Land Planning • Civil Engineering
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March 4, 2021
J.N. 0189-001-000

Steven L. Weinberg
1925 Century Park East, Suite 1990
Los Angeles, CA 90067

RE: 9650 Cedarbrook
Los Angeles, CA 90210

Dear Mr. Weinberg,

In accordance with your request, we have reviewed the set of Architectural Plans that you recently received for the above project. The plans cover the main residence and the roadway viaduct but do not totally cover the guest residence. This report is a supplement to our previous report dated September 11, 2020 which was prepared without the availability of permitted Architectural Plans.

Our focus in this review was to determine if the permitted project had complied with the ordinances that limit the heights and number of retaining walls in a hillside area (Ordinance No. 1764450) and the Baseline Hillside Ordinance (BHO) (Ordinance No. 181624) in affect at the time the permits were issued. In our previous report, we suspected that there were free standing retaining walls that were part of the project that were not counted as free standing retaining walls. We did not have the structural and civil plans for the project to confirm our suspicion but those are included in the set you provided. We have attached a partial set of those plans with our comments noted on the plan sheets. We do feel that there are free standing retaining walls as part of the project and they exceed both the height and number limits outlined in the ordinance. There are at least four (4) separate wall systems on the project site. Three exist around the building area and one exist at the entry of the driveway. The Department of Building and Safety has in the past enforced the wall ordinance to allow only two separate wall systems without obtaining a Zoning Administrator's special approval. Each wall system varies in height along the length of the wall but all exceed the allowable height of 12 feet. The walls are as high as approximately 40 feet. Again a Zoning Administrator's approval would be required to have walls higher than the ordinance allows. Also by identifying these walls an amount of grading that had been previously treated by Building and Safety as exempt would become non-exempt and count toward the maximum allowable grading as noted in the hillside ordinance. The maximum allowed grading for this zone is 3,300 cubic yards of non-exempt grading. The amount created by defining the outer walls as free standing retaining walls rather than footings of the structure probably would exceed this amount.

I would like to point you to the comments on the plans so you can better understand why we feel these areas are created by free standing retaining walls. The attached pdf has 53 pages so I will be referring to those pages for you to be able to locate them but will also give the sheet number pages for reference. First to see in a plan view the areas that are created by the free standing retaining walls look at pages 30 (C3.0), 35 (C3.5), 36 (C3.6) and 37 (C3.7). The areas are shown in a shaded yellow color. To see the sections relative to the Architectural Plan sheets look at pages 10 (A-5.00), 11 (A-5.10), 12 (A-5.20) and 13 (A-5.30). The walls that are in play are shown in a yellow shading and notes are provided. To see the sections relative to the Civil Plan sheets look at pages 41 (C4.0), 42 (C4.1) and 44 (C4.4). The walls that are in play are shown in a yellow shading and notes are provided. I have left the relative structural plan sheets in the set that were used to reach the above conclusions but have not further marked them up.

To summarize, we believe that the Department of Building and Safety granted a by right permit based on the assumption that all walls were part of the foundation system of the building. We believe this is a false assumption and once changed it would require the builder to seek special approvals from the Zoning Administrator. The text on the plan provided is hard to read so heights have been determine by looking at the grading plan and the finish floor elevations. They show a maximum height envelope on their section views in the drawings but it is not legible. In this zone without a Zoning Administrator's approval the hillside ordinance allows 36 feet. With special approval it can go to 45 feet. Since we are seeing wall heights that are at around 40 feet at the face of the walls it is not clear how they meet the maximum height envelope requirements even if the walls were made part of the foundation of the building.

This concludes are overview of the project plans. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (818) 404-7828 or at my e-mail msukow@earthlink.net.

Sincerely,



Melvin Sukow
R.C.E C022673