

**WRITTEN  
PUBLIC  
COMMENT  
CITY COUNCIL  
MEETING**

**MAY 7, 2024**

Peter Wilkins  
Demetria Pizano  
54680 Avenida Juarez  
La Quinta, CA 92253

5/7/2024

Mayor Evans  
Councilmembers Fitzpatrick, McGarrey and Sanchez  
78-495 Calle Tampico  
La Quinta, CA 92253

Dear City Council,

My name is Peter Wilkins, and cc'd is my partner Demetria Pizano. We are new homeowners in your city, having bought our home in La Quinta Cove in August 2022. We fell in love with the beautiful views and the opportunity to own a home in a quiet, peaceful place. We have lived in The Cove for 16 months.

Unfortunately, the reality has been very challenging. On September 15th, 2023, we received a Courtesy Notice, and later, a Notice of Violation, from the City's Code Compliance Division stating that unpermitted modifications to our front block wall had been made. We investigated further and learned that the sellers of our home had raised the front block wall by a single course of bricks.

This work was done without a permit by the previous owners, and **it was not disclosed to us during the sale of our home**. This is unfortunate, and we understand it is now ***our*** responsibility to remedy their violation and bring our home into code compliance via the permitting process.

What we don't understand is why we are the only home being unfairly targeted by Code Compliance, when **at least** one other home, on the same street, with the same wall, and with the exact same unpermitted modification to their block wall, is not being cited? This feels like bias and maybe even discrimination. Is this related to us being newer home owners that paid a higher price than the other owners? We're not sure, but it isn't fair, and we're not happy with how Code Compliance is treating new home owners in La Quinta.

We have since been engaged in a very long and drawn out sequence of communications with Code Compliance, which at times has taken 2-3 weeks to respond to each of our emails or voicemails as we have tried to learn more and work with them to resolve the problem. We have at times waited weeks to hear back from Code Compliance.

We have completed the requested structural engineering study and provided this to the Permit department to justify that the wall complies with applicable building codes. They are now asking

us to provide information on the contractor who did the work. Since it was the sellers who performed this work, 4 years ago, and not us, we have not contracted with anyone to perform this work and we have no way of directly knowing who did this work and whether or not they were even licensed contractors. Fortunately, we were able to learn who did the work from our neighbor, **who has the exact same wall, built at the same time, with the exact same unpermitted addition, who is not being cited or harassed by the city in any way.** We then provided permitting this information which includes the contractor name, address, and CSLB#. Permitting then refused to approve our permit, because they require that the contractor has a business license in La Quinta!

We are unable to make contact with this contractor and have no idea if he even still lives in California. We have tried explaining to Permit that we have not contracted anyone to do this work, this work was done 4 years ago by the sellers, and we have no control over what licenses a contractor from 4 years ago that we **have not contracted with** had or has today. Unfortunately, our attempt to explain this nuance has fallen on deaf ears. Demetria and I have both called and left voicemails, and we've both emailed them asking them to call us so we can talk to someone on the phone about this. Nobody has answered the phone or returned our calls, and instead, on 4/30/2024 we receive an email that Permit is still refusing to grant us the permit, for which a structural engineering study has already shown is safe and in compliance, because the licensed California contractor who the **sellers** contracted with, may not have had a La Quinta city business license at the time the work was done, four years ago?

We are sure you can understand why at this point we are extremely frustrated and unhappy with the treatment we've received, and feel we have been unfairly targeted and discriminated against. It is clearly unreasonable to expect us to change who the sellers of our home contracted with four years ago, and we have no control over whether or not a contractor we have not contracted, had a LQ business license four years ago. We have never felt so mistreated by any place we have lived. Our emails have gone unanswered for weeks, our calls have not been returned, and we have thus been unable to partner effectively with the City to resolve this issue.

In conclusion we ask that there be a more consistent and fair enforcement of municipal building codes throughout the City, that Code Compliance is given a Service Level Agreement (SLA) that requires them to respond to Residents within 3-5 business days and certainly faster than 2-3 weeks per email or call, and most importantly, we ask **that you grant us this permit and let us move on with our lives after 8 months and thousands of dollars spent correcting the non-disclosures of our home's previous owners.**

Sincerely,  
Peter Wilkins & Demetria Pizano  
54680 Avenida Juarez  
La Quinta, CA 92253

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**From:** Peter Wilkins <peter.a.wilkins@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, May 6, 2024 8:27 PM  
**To:** City Clerk Mail; jnelson@laquintaca.gov  
**Cc:** Demetria Pizano  
**Subject:** Request for City Council Help + Public Comments For 5/7/24 City Council  
**Attachments:** La Quinta City Hall Complaint May 2024.pdf

Dear Jennifer Nelson,

As per your conversation with my partner Demetria today (cc'd), please find attached our request for help from the City Council, to be forwarded to them individually, as well as to be added to the Public Comments for the upcoming 5/7/2024 City Council meeting.

I have also included the message below, and we look forward to hearing back from the Mayor and our Councilmembers soon.

Thank you,  
Peter Wilkins & Demetria Pizano  
54680 Avenida Juarez, La Quinta, CA 92253

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