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**Subject:** 2025-03-27 Hearing Meeting - Comments to 1715 W Balboa Blvd Application for Time Extension  
**Date:** March 26, 2025 3:51:09 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Dear Hearing Officer,

We are Eric and Michelle Ghidotti of 1713 A W. Balboa, the neighbors directly adjacent to the subject property owned by Richard Selby.

We strongly urge you to DENY the permit extension request for 1715 W. Balboa Blvd. The below explains why a permit extension should be denied and details various serious issues and concerns that must be rectified immediately.

### **1. No Meaningful Progress Will Be Made**

The Staff Report contains multiple inaccuracies. It claims that the project began with Permit X2020-1565 on March 2, 2021, but in reality, the work started in July 2018 under a permit for a simple re-roof.

Instead of following that permit, Mr. Selby illegally began demolition (without proper asbestos or lead remediation) and expanded the structure without City approval. After multiple complaints from neighbors, the City finally issued a Stop Work Order and required plans and a permit.

In over 6 years, there has been no substantial progress despite multiple extensions. Moreover, the delays are entirely self-inflicted—Mr. Selby has consistently employed only two workers, ignored compliance requirements, and failed to meet his own projected timelines.

The City can only grant an extension if delays were caused by circumstances beyond the owner's control. Mr. Selby himself has cited:

- Issues with bad beams from three years ago.
- Burglaries from 2022.
- Minor fit difficulties with materials.

These are not valid reasons to grant an extension. Furthermore, there is no reason to believe another extension will result in any meaningful completion.

### **2. There are Unsightly, Unsafe Structures which should be immediately removed**

The property remains an eyesore and a public nuisance due to:

- Unpermitted tarp structures covering the project.
- Dangerous, non-OSHA-compliant scaffolding that was improperly constructed.

Before any further work is allowed, Mr. Selby should be required to remove all tarps and temporary scaffolding and replace them with professional scaffolding with mesh screening to ensure proper safety and visibility.

### **3. A Full Inspection by Planning and Building has not occurred and should be mandated**

For years, Mr. Selby has concealed numerous violations under tarps, preventing proper oversight. As a result, there exist a number of building and setback violations. A full inspection must be conducted to assess:

- The structural integrity of the framing (which does not match the approved plans).
- The extent of unauthorized demolitions and expansions.
- Any additional code violations hidden from public view.

Given the ongoing Stop Work Order, the City must confirm the full scope of violations before considering any further permit requests.

### **4. This is No Longer a Remodel & A New Permit is Necessary to Ensure Compliance with Current Building and Zoning Codes**

The current permit (X2020-1565) allows the owner to be “grandfathered” under outdated codes. If Mr. Selby is required to obtain a new permit, the project will be considered new construction and must conform to current building and zoning codes. This would protect neighboring properties and ensure the project is held to proper safety and environmental standards. The original permit was issued as a remodel, allowing Mr. Selby to avoid stricter building regulations. However, it is now clear that:

- More than 50% of the exterior walls have been demolished and replaced.
- The floor area increase likely exceeds the 10% limit, potentially requiring a Coastal Development Permit.
- The project no longer qualifies as a remodel under current zoning and building regulations.

A new permit must be required, classifying this project as new construction and subjecting it to 2025 building codes.

### **5. Further Construction Must Require (a) ALL violations be cured and (b) Imposition of a Strict Completion Timeline with a Licensed General Contractor**

If any further construction is permitted, the City must:

- Mandate a strict completion timeline with clear, enforceable progress milestones.
- Require a licensed general contractor to oversee the project, ensuring professional standards and preventing further delays.
- Verify a realistic workforce plan (not just two workers on-site).
- Require all existing violations be enumerated and cured

Mr. Selby has a clear track record of falsely submitting completion dates, which the City has continuously accepted:

- January 2024 Extension Request: Stated completion by 8/8/24 (accepted by the City).
- July 2024 Extension Request: Stated completion by 1/17/25 (accepted by the City).
- December 2024 Extension Request: Stated completion by 3/2/25 (accepted by the City).

Now, he is requesting another extension with no clear timeline for completion.

## **6. The Staff Report incorrectly interprets CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act)**

The Staff Report incorrectly states that the project qualifies for a CEQA (California Environmental Quality Act) exemption under Section 15301 (Existing Facilities). However, CEQA explicitly states that projects covered under this exemption must involve only minor alterations with no expansion of use.

- Mr. Selby exceeded the 10% expansion limit permitted under CEQA.
- He falsely submitted “existing structure” drawings that do not reflect the actual scope of the expansion.
- He only has two grandfathered parking spaces, yet he has City permits for short-term rentals for 14 persons. The code requires four parking spaces for this type of use, meaning his lack of parking directly impacts the neighborhood environment by increasing street congestion.

This project has been a public nuisance for over six years, dragging down the image of our beautiful neighborhood and affecting the surrounding properties. The City must act now, hold Mr. Selby accountable and protect the neighborhood by:

1. Denying the permit extension due to lack of progress and ongoing violations;
2. Requiring the immediate removal of tarps and non-OSHA-compliant scaffolding;
3. Mandating a full inspection to assess all hidden violations;

4. Enforcing a new permit process, requiring compliance with 2025 building codes;
5. Imposing a strict timeline and ensuring only a licensed general contractor completes the project; and
6. Identifying and requiring cure of all existing violations.

Sincerely,

Eric and Michelle Ghidotti

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