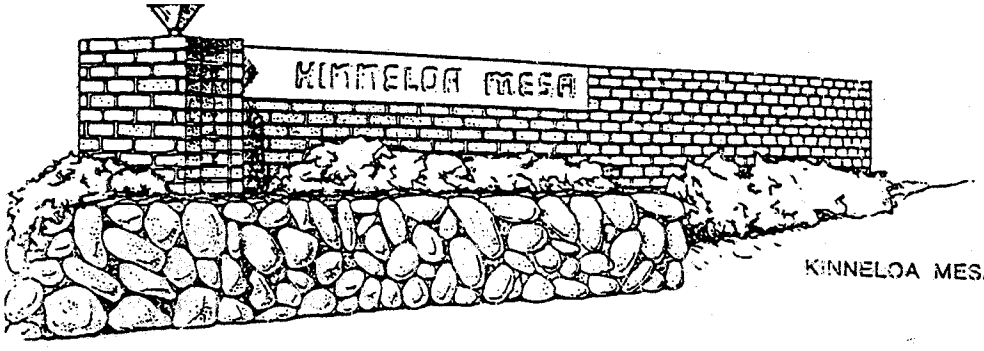
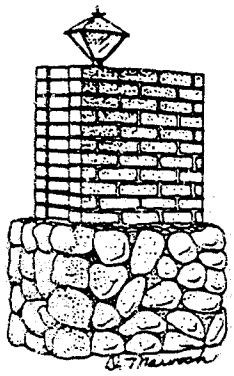


KINNELOA MESA ASSOCIATION, INC.



February 10, 2009

VIA E-MAIL

Mr. Adam Thurtell, Regional Planning Assistant II
Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning
Zoning Permits Section I
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: 2288 North Villa Heights Road, Pasadena

Dear Mr. Thurtell:

I am the President of the Kinneola Mesa Association ("KMA"). I am writing to request that after-the-fact permission for the wall **be denied** and an order be given to have it removed. The County of Los Angeles must enforce its legal regulations and procedures to ensure that consideration is given to the environment, community, and the safety and integrity of construction requiring permits.

If the County begins to allow walls and structures to be built with such blatant disregard for the neighboring community and the County's legal rules, procedures and regulations, it would set a new standard and would be detrimental to **all** county residents, including those of us within the KMA. If land owners are allowed to proceed as they wish, regardless of the impact on their neighbors, the community in which they live, and/or the environment, we will all be taking a huge step backwards. This would also undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. Accordingly, we hereby request that you **do not grant the Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification needed for wall #2008-00030, 2288 North Villa Heights Road.** Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gerrie Kilburn

Gerrie Kilburn
President, KMA

FEB 12 2009

Regional Planning Commission Presentation
by Rudy Tekippe, RCE
February 11,2009

Mr. Chairman and Honorable Committee Members, thank you for giving me the opportunity to plead my case with you today. My name is Rudy Tekippe, I live adjacent to 2288 Villa Heights Road(VHR) and I am a California licensed civil engineer (see Fig 1).

My wife and I have resisted this non-permitted wall and its predecessor fence from the time that we first heard of its concept. It has been devastating to our property from an environmental and value standpoint. You have a copy of my December 18, 2008 letter describing the many problems it has created. It covers over half of my lot perimeter and blocks our views to the east and south, greatly reducing the ambience and value of our property.

Mr Ren and I had a handshake agreement to remove the fence across our common stream, thereby greatly improving the scenery for both properties. When asked to assist, the architect talked to the owner and decided instead to build the wall without giving me notice. Thereafter, the project changed to make an adversely impacted area much worse than before.

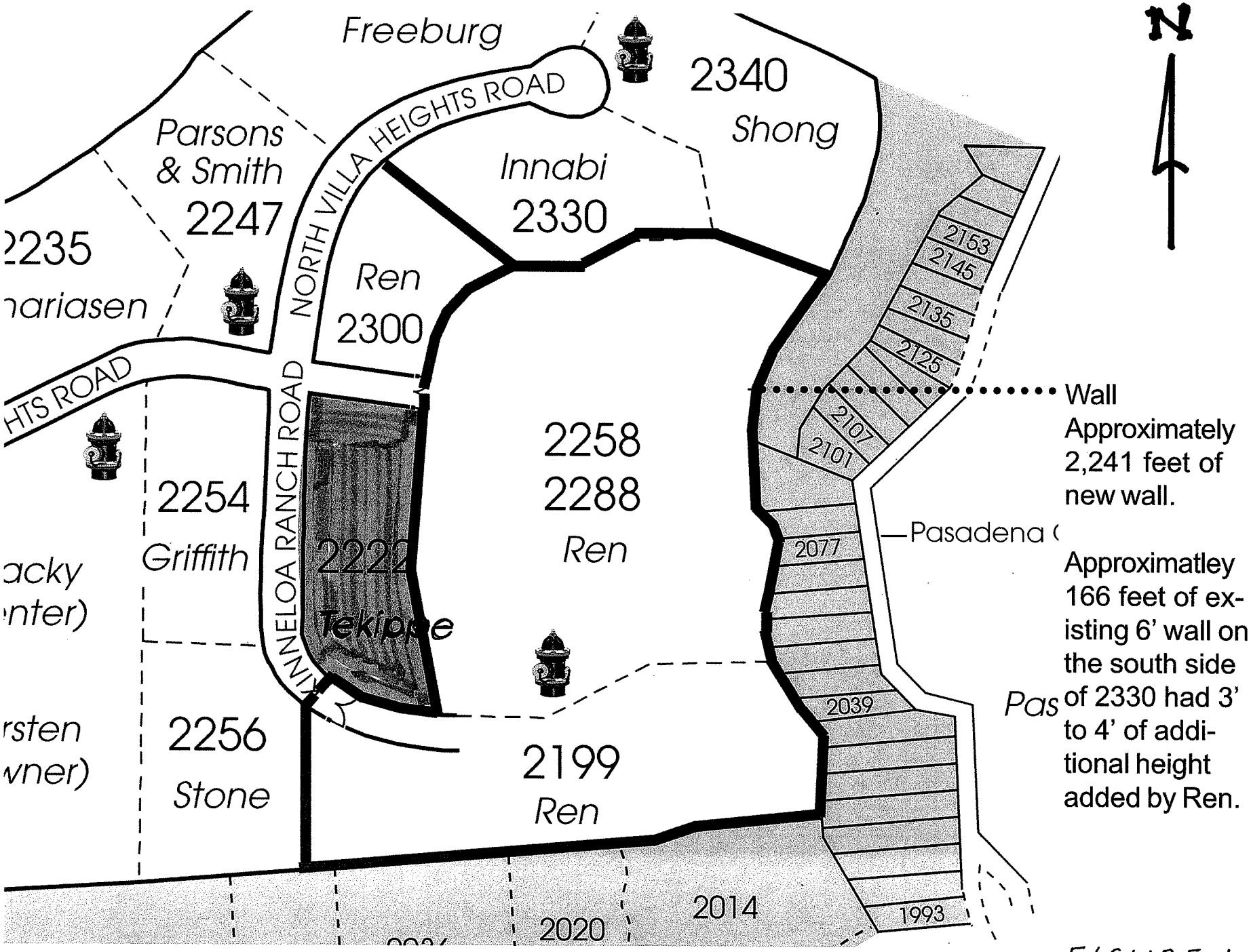
Also, wildlife movement patterns have been altered by the wall and we see fewer deer, coyotes, quail, and other animals that we have always enjoyed. I have professionally worked on environmental impact reports and believe that this wall has created enough environmental concerns that a negative declaration with mitigation is a minimal requirement for this project.

The wall has been constructed in a way that does not come close to complying with the code and should be removed for safety and environmental reasons. As reports have said, the wall is over six feet tall and in some places exceeds 10 ft in height. Figures 2 and 3 show the design of a concrete block wall built according to the " Standard Plans for Public Works Construction" and another from a thirty-year old Masonry Design Manual for a 6-inch thick residential garden fence. The as-built wall of 2288 VHR is shown schematically. Even at six feet of height, the wall clearly fails to meet minimum standards. Furthermore, a top-to-bottom crack one quarter inch wide has already opened up in at least one location (see photos attached). One can see through the wall at this point and there is no horizontal steel rebar. The wall is simply unsafe and should be demolished.

How could this massive wall get built without a permit? The architect, Mr Coane has been working on design and construction oversight for this property and owner for about four years that I know of. One early project was constructing a chain link fence which was built about two years before the wall. With his experience in getting permits and retroactive permits, including oak tree permits, it is outrageous that this wall was completed without getting all permits ahead of time. In my professional opinion, the architect has an obligation to ensure that the owner, regardless of birthplace, is fully informed about this and in no way proceeds without permits in hand.

In summary, this illegally constructed wall should be removed as soon as possible and, if the owner wants to build a legitimate one, he should do so only by way of following the regulatory process like the rest of us. Any thing short of this makes a mockery of the whole, long-established procedure of review and approvals.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns.


N
Freeburg
NORTH VILLA HEIGHTS ROAD
2340
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Innabi
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Parsons
& Smith
2247
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MINNELOA RANCH ROAD
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Stone
2199
Ren
2020
2014
2153
2145
2135
2125
2107
2101
2077
2039
1993
Pasadena
Pas
Wall
Approximately
2,241 feet of
new wall.
Approximatley
166 feet of ex-
isting 6' wall on
the south side
of 2330 had 3'
to 4' of addi-
tional height
added by Ren.

FIGURE 1

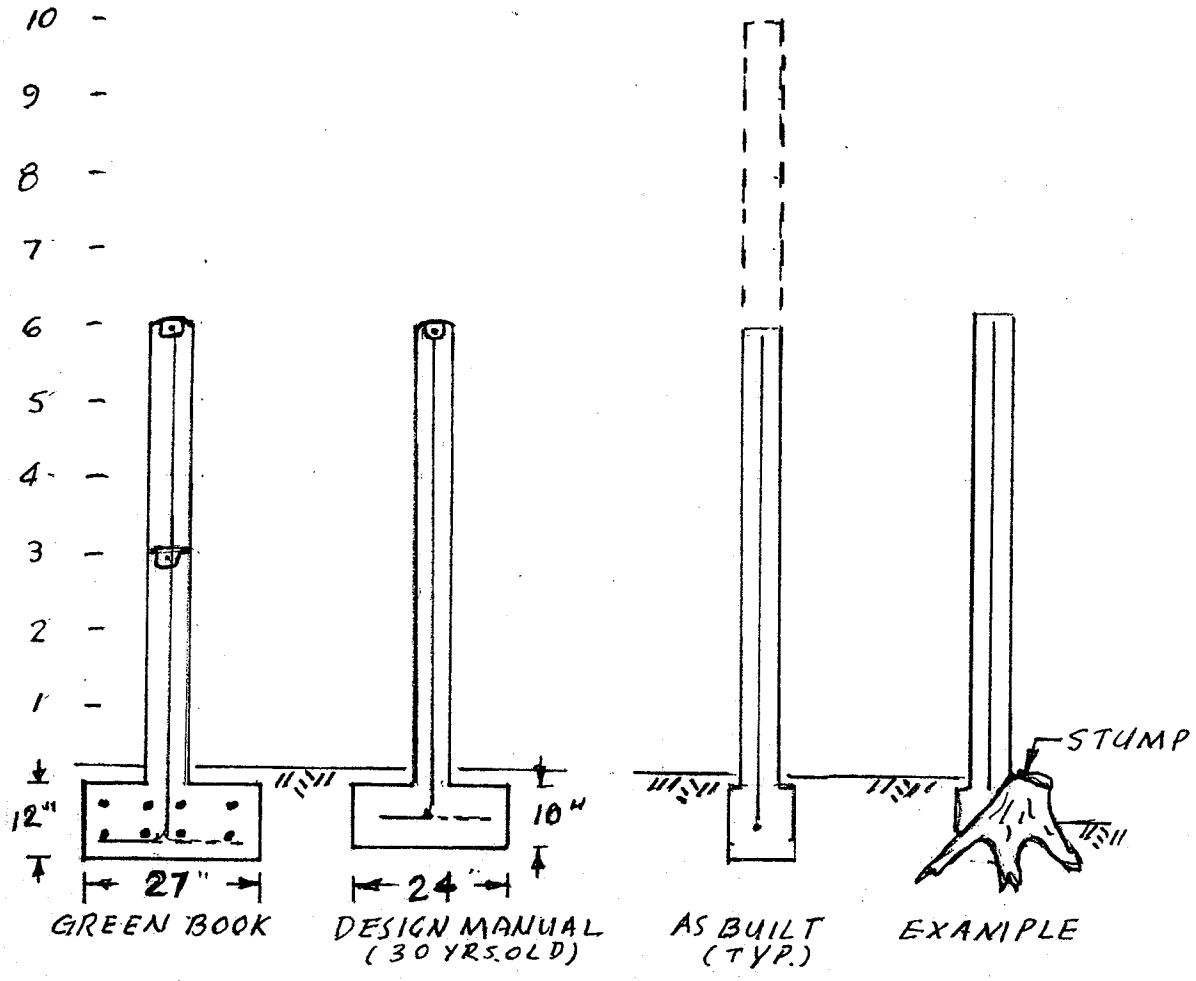
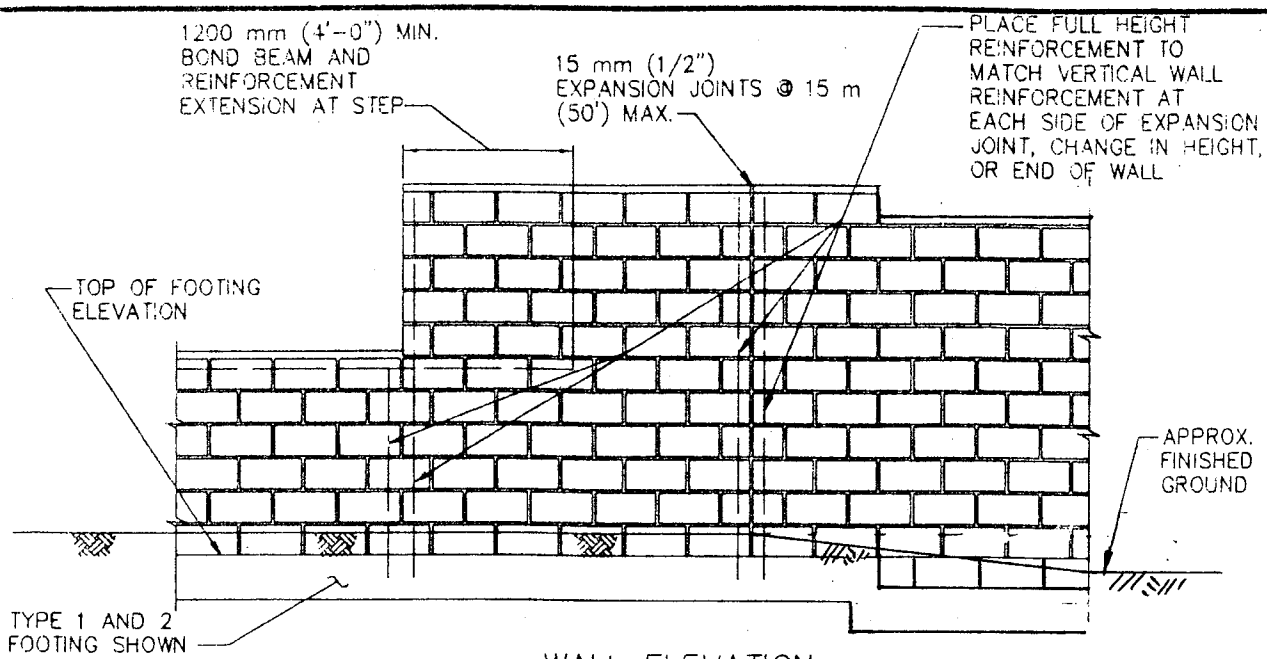
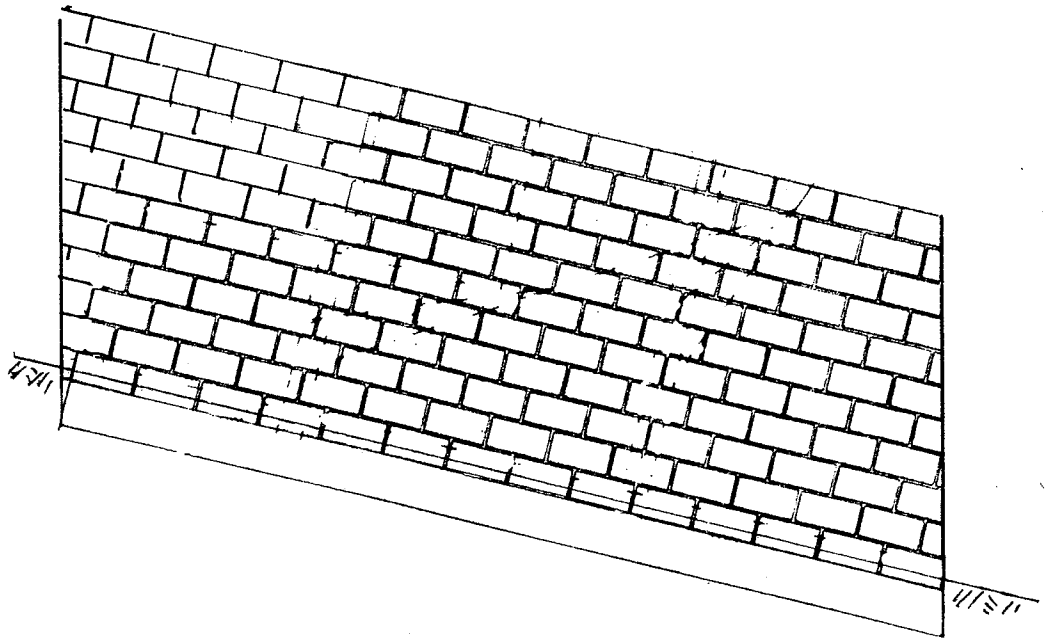

10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
12"
27"
24"
10"
STUMP
GREEN BOOK
DESIGN MANUAL
(30 YRS. OLD)
AS BUILT
(TYP.)
EXAMPLE

FIGURE 2

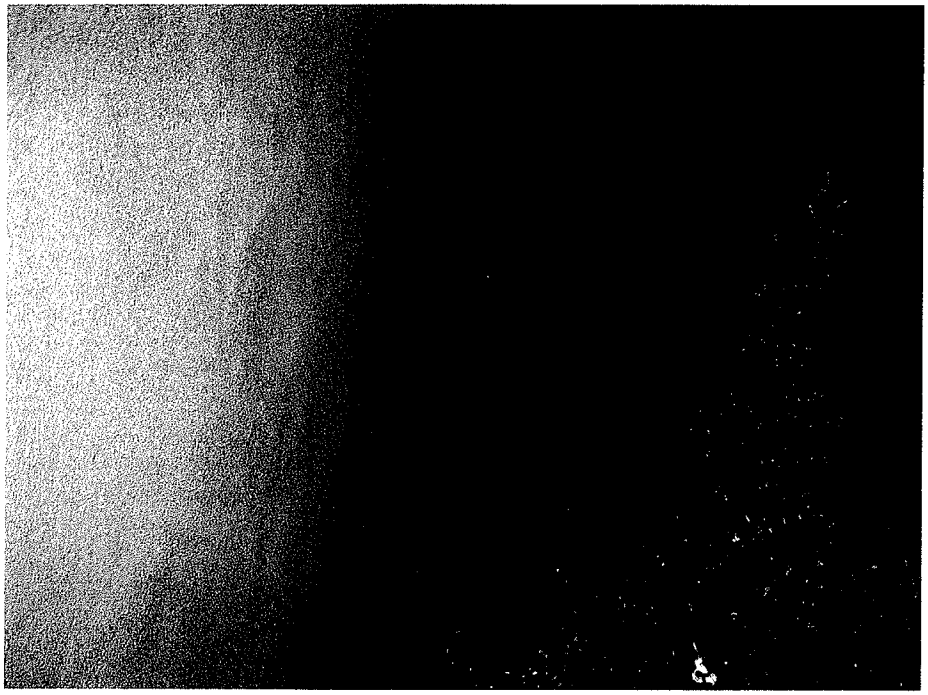


WALL ELEVATION

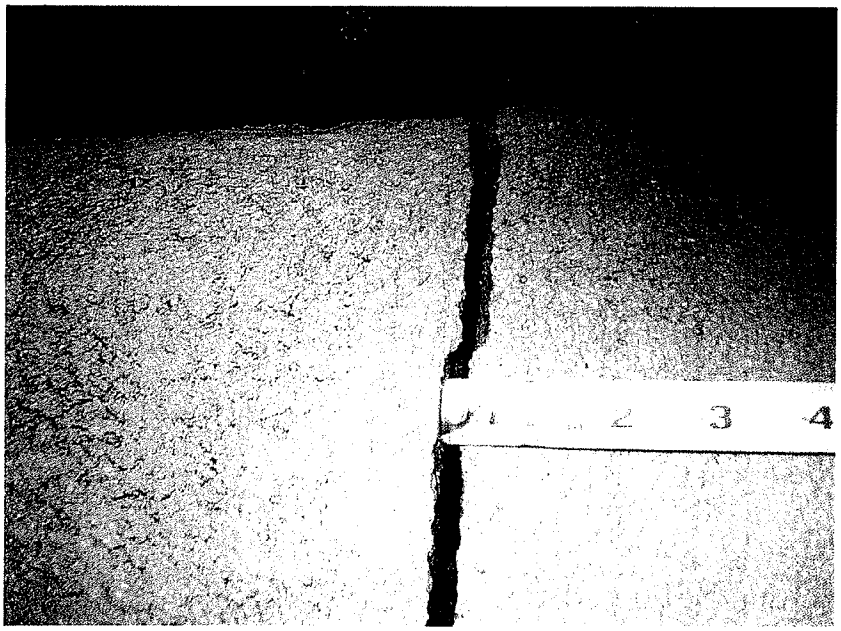


AS BUILT ON SLOPES

FIGURE 3

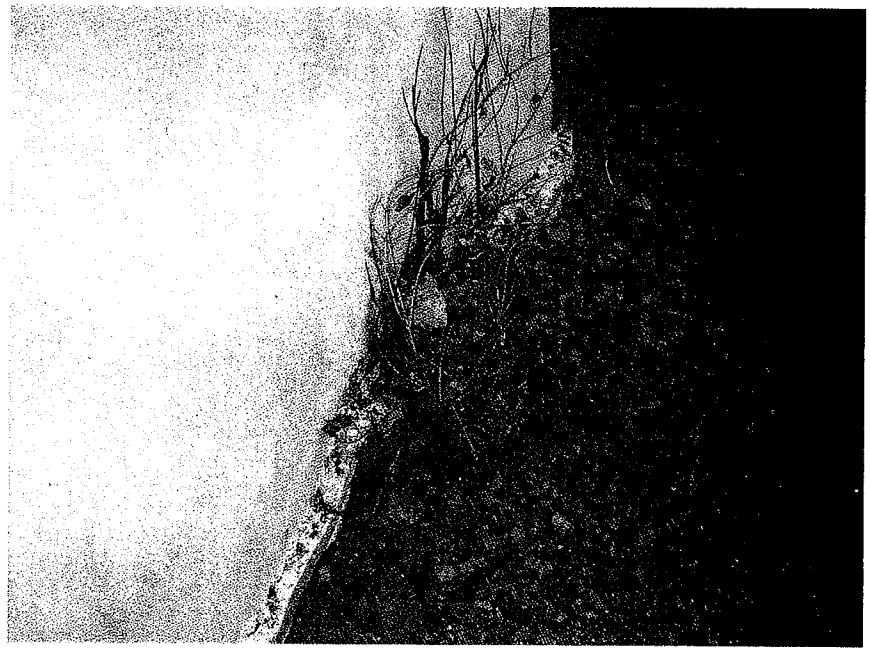


WALL HAS BEEN BUILT OVER TREE TRUNK



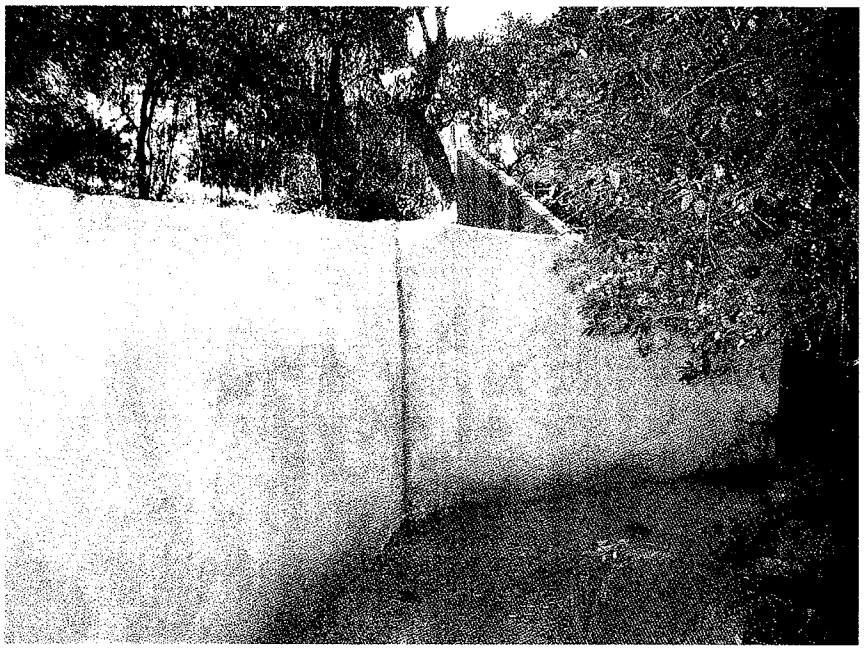
CRACK FROM TOP TO BOTTOM HAS EXCEEDED 0.25 in

CUT FRUIT TREES TO MAKE WAY FOR OVER-HEIGHT WALL

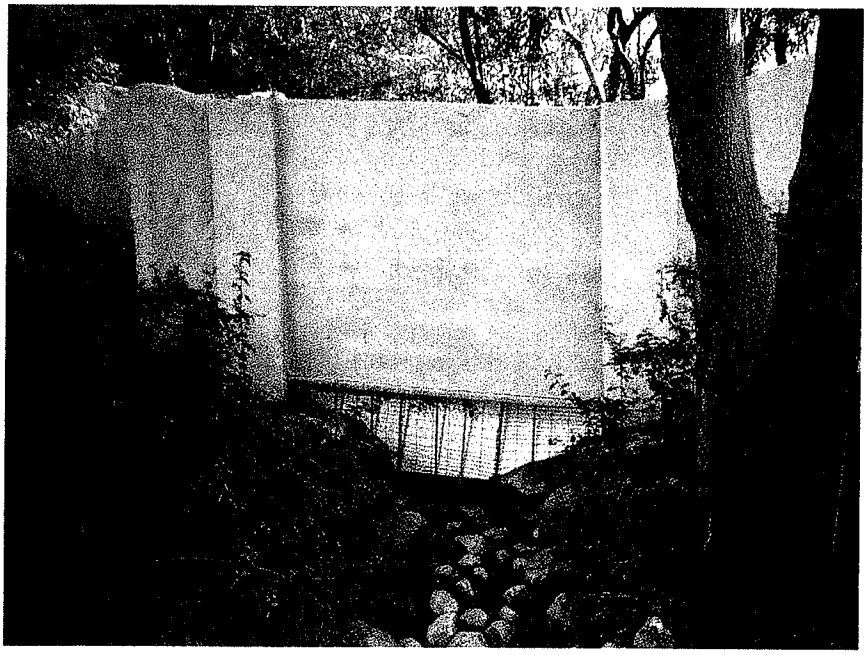


BUILT WALL RIGHT OVER OLD STUMP

FAILED TO MATCH UP WITH EXISTING WALL



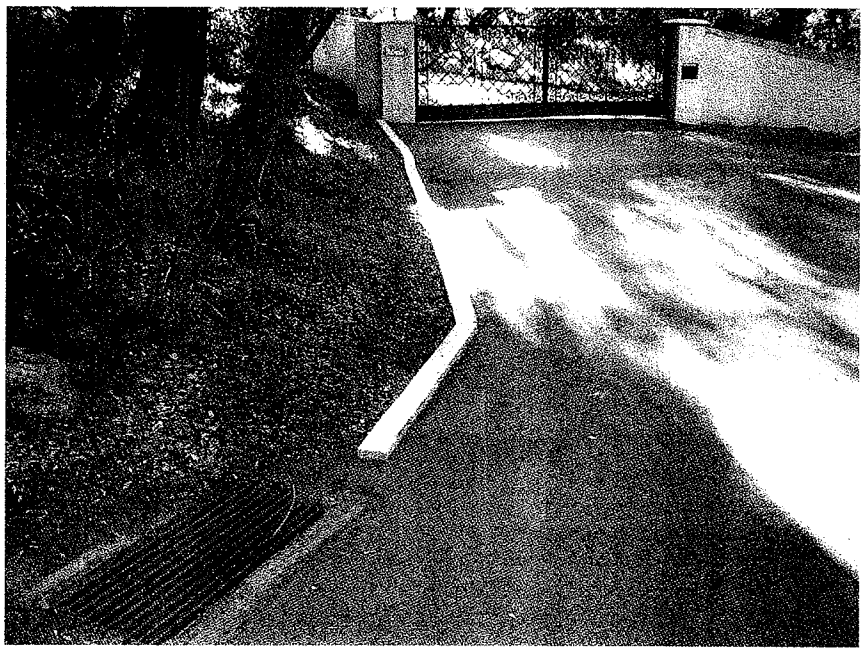
COMPLETELY BLOCKED VIEW OF COMMON STREAM



COMPLETELY BLOCKED VIEW OF COMMON RECIRCULATING STREAM

CREATED PATH TO NOWHERE(BLANK WALL)

DRILLED HOLES TO REDUCE PONDING BEHIND WALL



GLUED CONCRETE BRICK TO CORRECT ROAD ALTERATION

5 July 2009

2222 Kinneloa Ranch Rd
Pasadena, CA 91107

Mr Adam Thurtell, Regional Planning Assistant II
Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning
Zoning Permits Section I
320 West Temple St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Subject: Yard modification denial appeal of RPP200900637

Dear Mr Thurtell:

As you know, a hearing on the Subject denial has been scheduled for July 8, 2009. On June 17, 2009, James Coane submitted an appeal requesting that the Director's decision denying the yard modification be overturned. Well over one hundred pages of information were submitted therewith to support his appeal. I have read his appeal information and am appalled by its basic thrust to distort the facts of the case. The purpose of my letter today is to point out but a few of the many items of inaccuracy and restate my position against the over-height wall. I could make this a many-page letter pointing out numerous erroneous statements in the appeal but will forgo that because much of what I would say has already been presented to you in my letter dated December 18, 2008, my presentation to the Commission on February 11, 2009 and my written submittal of the presentation and its attachments.

One of the most disturbing things about the appeal is its attempt to trivialize the written objection letters of the neighbors. I know most of the people that have written in and can assure you that they are expressing their heartfelt position and not merely signing a form letter. That is absolutely the case in my December letter and it is an insult to these people to insinuate that their letters are not genuine.

The appeal says that the wall between my property and that of 2288 and 2300 Villa Heights Road and 2199 Kinneloa Ranch Road is six feet or less in height. This is absolutely not true.

The top paragraph on page four states that Ms Stone and Dr Fisher are the only objecting adjacent property owners. That is also false because I am adjacent and I object.

The next paragraph implies that the wall construction has not impacted the oak trees. If there were no impact on the trees after so much damage to their roots and building right up against their trunks with concrete, the regulations would have to be grossly over

restrictive. We all know that it takes time for some of the adverse impacts on trees to manifest themselves.

The appeal does not address the fact that drainage in my far southeast corner has been cut off. Ponding of water must have been evident to Mr. Coane and/or his client because holes were drilled through the wall at its base in this area to let the water through.

The appeal states that the wall is structurally sound and cites an engineering report by Calcivic Engineering, Inc. as documentation. I am a licensed Civil Engineer in California and am knowledgeable about the fundamentals of structures. My submittal at the February 11, 2009 hearing attests to the fact that the wall as built does not conform to code. The Calcivic report that I have seen does not give text explaining and actually stating that the wall is safe. The calculations shown therein are based on a hypothetical design with reinforcing steel carefully placed and a large foundation. I do not believe that any part of the wall as built conforms to this hypothetical design and am certain that much of it does not come close. As shown in my February 11th submittal, a part of the wall has no foundation because it was built right over on old tree stump!! My submittal also shows a photograph of a one quarter inch crack in the wall where it was built up against an oak tree. At that point, you can see through the wall and count reinforcing steel bars if there were any. There is no horizontal steel bar reinforcement in the wall as shown in the hypothetical design at that point. In summary, it is my professional opinion that the structural adequacy of the wall clearly has not been established.

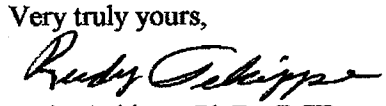
I could go on and on attacking many additional items of the appeal. In summary, the Director's decision to deny the subject Yard Modification request was correct. The Commission should not be fooled by errors and misleading information in the appeal and should not overrule the Director's decision.

In closing, it is depressing to see the many hours of numerous people's time that has been spent in resolving this dispute that was created by someone who tried to do a needless end run around the well established permit system of Los Angeles County. To reward this person by overturning the Director's decision would be an outrage.

If you have any questions or would like additional details on any of the above information, please feel free to call me at your convenience. My phone numbers are given below.

Thank you in advance for consideration of my position on this important issue.

Very truly yours,



Rudy Tekippe, Ph.D., RCE

Home phone: 626 798 0172
Cell phone: 626 893 2735