



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning



Planning for the Challenges Ahead

Jon Sanabria, AICP
Acting Director of Planning

DATE: June 24, 2009

TO: Leslie G. Bellamy, Chair
Wayne Rew, Vice Chair
Esther L. Valadez, Commissioner
Harold V. Helsley, Commissioner
Pat Modugno, Commissioner

FROM: Mark Child 
Section Head, Zoning Permits I

SUBJECT: **Project No. R2005-00187-(5)**
Oak Tree Permit No. RPP200900637
July 8, 2009 Regional Planning Commission Meeting
Agenda Item No. 7

On June 3, 2009, the Planning Director denied yard modification request RPP200900637. Yard modification RPP200900637 requested authorization for a wall in excess of the height allowed by County Zoning Code. The wall is located on three adjacent parcels, APNs 5760004018, 5760004016, and 5760003006. On June 17, 2009 the applicant appealed the denial.

RPP200900637 proposed an eight foot tall wall on the north and east boundaries of the property and a six foot tall wall on the south and west property boundaries. The branch of wall to the north west, along the northern property boundary of APN 5760003006 would be six feet in height

There are no similar walls in the area, and no conditions create an unnecessary hardship or unreasonable regulation or make it obviously impractical to require compliance. The applicant's application does not provide justification for waiver of the required yard standards, and therefore the Director denied the request.

Staff has clarified with the applicant that denial of the yard modification means that the wall must comply with County Zoning Code development standards, and specifically to Section 22.48.160 regarding walls and fences. Staff offered to meet with the applicant to review the plans for the wall and determine any changes that need to be made to bring the wall into compliance with County Zoning Code and avoid violations.

The applicant submitted materials in support of the appeal (attached). The additional materials included a letter of opposition from neighbor Rhonda Stone, a withdrawal of opposition from neighbor Hugo Shong, the oak tree report, the hearing notice and location map, a third-party hydrology report, calculations for block wall, a video of a bear in a fountain, photos of the surrounding neighborhood, and receipts. Staff has



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reviewed the materials, recommends that the Commission uphold the Director's decision to deny yard modification RPP200900637 because the additional materials do not affect the reasons why the yard modificatoin request was denied.

Suggested motion:

I move that the Regional Planning Commission uphold the Director's denial of Plot Plan 200900637

MC:AT

RECEIVED
JUN 22 2009

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

I am appealing the decision of (check one and fill in the underlying information):

Director
Decision Date: JUNE 3, 2009

Hearing Officer
Public Hearing Date: _____
Hearing Officer's Name: _____
Agenda Item Number: _____

The following decision is being appealed (check all that apply):

- The Denial of this request
 The Approval of this request
 The following conditions of approval:

List conditions here

The reason for this appeal is as follows:

The Applicant appeals on the following grounds: (1) the record on which the Director's decision was based contains inaccurate information; (2) the Director's determination is not supported by the record below, (3) there was an error in discretion, and (4) the Director's determination is not in accord with the purposes of Title 22 of the Code where the denial of the yard modification request fails to give due and special consideration to the fact that the strict application of wall height restrictions to the subject property would result in an unnecessary hardship

(5) SEE ATTACHED, HEREBY INCORPORATED HEREIN

Are you the applicant for the subject case(s) (check one)? YES NO

Submitted herewith is a check or money order for the amount of \$ 1,352* (if applicant) \$677* (if non-applicant).



JAMES V COANE

Appellant (Signature)

Print Name

30 N RAYMOND AVE. SUITE 611, PASADENA, CA. 91103

Address

626-584-6922

Day Time Telephone No.

**FINDINGS AND ORDER OF THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**

**PROJECT NO. R2005-00187-(5)
PLOT PLAN NO. 200900637-(5)**

REQUEST: Hui Xian Zhang is appealing the Director's denial of a yard modification request. The denied yard modification requested to retroactively authorize a perimeter wall in excess of the maximum height allowed by the County Zoning Code R-1-40000 (Single Family Residential) Zone.

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING DATE: July 8, 2009

PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION:
July 8, 2009 Discussion/Possible Action Item

Findings

1. The applicant is requesting a yard modification to retroactively authorize a perimeter wall in excess of the maximum height allowed by the County Zoning Code. The maximum height allowed is six feet. The existing wall ranges in height from six feet to approximately twelve feet, and the proposed changes to the wall ranges in height from six to eight feet. A yard modification is needed to authorize the portion of the wall over six feet in height, and for portions of the wall that are within the front yard setback and are over three and one half feet.
2. The subject property is located at 2288 & 2300 Villa Heights, and 2199 Kinneloa Ranch in the Northeast Pasadena Zoned District.
3. The General Plan land use designation for the property is 1 (Low Density Residential) which allows one to six dwellings per acre.
4. The property is zoned R-1-40,000 (Single Family Residence, 40,000 square foot lot minimum).
5. The subject properties maintain three single-family residences.
6. The yard requirements for this zone, pursuant to Section 22.48.160 and Chapter 22.48 of Title 22, are:

Fences and walls may be erected and maintained in required yards subject to the requirements specified herein:

- A. Front Yards. Fences and walls within a required front yard shall not exceed a height of three and one-half feet.
 - B. Corner Side Yards. Fences and walls within a required corner side yard shall not exceed three and one-half feet in height where closer than five feet to the highway line, nor exceed six feet in height where five feet or more from said highway line.
 - C. Interior Side and Rear Yards. Fences and walls within a required interior side or rear yard shall not exceed six feet in height; provided, however, that on the street or highway side of a corner lot such fence or wall shall be subject to the same requirements as for a corner side yard.
 - D. Retaining Walls. Retaining walls not to exceed six feet in height are permitted in all yards.
7. Section 22.48.180 of Title 22 authorizes the Director to grant a modification to yard or setback regulations only where topographic features, subdivision plans or other conditions create an unnecessary hardship or unreasonable regulation or make it obviously impractical to require compliance. The applicant's application does not provide justification for waiver of the required yard standards. There are no topographic features that require a wall of over six feet. The subdivision of the area follows or exceeds standard lot configurations and sizes. Complying with the Zoning Code requirements would not create hardship.
8. Seventeen opposition letters were received. One opposition letter was subsequently withdrawn. Opposition letters stated concerns including the height, visual prominence, lack of justification pursuant to County Code 22.48.180, and the fact that the wall was built with no permits.

PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION:

In view of the findings of fact and conclusions presented above, Plot Plan No. 200900637-(5) is **DENIED**.

c: Zoning Enforcement, Building and Safety

MC:AT
6/24/09



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Jon Sanabria
Acting Director of Planning

June 3, 2009

CERTIFIED MAIL – RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

James Coane
30 N. Raymond Ave. Ste. 611
Pasadena, CA 91103

Dear Applicant:

RE: **R2005-00187-(5)**
RPP200900637
2288 & 2300 Villa Heights, 2199 Kinneloa Ranch

Based on the attached findings and order, the Director has **DENIED** R2005-00187-(5), RPP200900637 for a yard modification request to authorize a perimeter wall in excess of the height allowed by the County Zoning Code.

Pursuant to Part 5 of Section 22.60 of the Los Angeles County Zoning Code (Title 22), the applicant or any other interested person may appeal the Director's decision to the Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission (Commission) through the Commission's secretary in Room 1350, Hall of Records, 320 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. Please contact the Commission's secretary at (213) 974-6409 for information on the appeal procedure and fee. The appeal must be received by June 17, 2009. The Director's decision may also be called up for review by the Commission during the appeal period.

If no appeal is made during this period, the Director's decision is final. For any other questions or information regarding this approval, please contact Adam Thurtell at (213) 974-6443.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING
Jon Sanabria
Acting Director of Planning

Mark Child, Supervising Regional Planner
Zoning Permits I Section

Attachments

DIRECTOR'S FINDINGS AND ORDER:

1. The applicant is requesting a yard modification to retroactively authorize a perimeter wall in excess of the maximum height allowed by the County Zoning Code. The maximum height allowed is six feet. The existing wall ranges in height from six feet to approximately twelve feet, and the proposed changes to the wall ranges in height from six to eight feet. A yard modification is needed to authorize the portion of the wall over six feet in height.
2. The subject property is located at 2288 & 2300 Villa Heights, and 2199 Kinneloa Ranch in the Northeast Pasadena Zoned District.
3. The General Plan land use designation for the property is 1 (Low Density Residential) which allows one to six dwellings per acre.
4. The property is zoned R-1-40,000 (Single Family Residence, 40,000 square foot lot minimum).
5. The subject properties maintain three single-family residences.
6. The yard requirements for this zone, pursuant to Section 22.48.160 and Chapter 22.48 of Title 22, are:

Fences and walls may be erected and maintained in required yards subject to the requirements specified herein:

- A. Front Yards. Fences and walls within a required front yard shall not exceed a height of three and one-half feet.
 - B. Corner Side Yards. Fences and walls within a required corner side yard shall not exceed three and one-half feet in height where closer than five feet to the highway line, nor exceed six feet in height where five feet or more from said highway line.
 - C. Interior Side and Rear Yards. Fences and walls within a required interior side or rear yard shall not exceed six feet in height; provided, however, that on the street or highway side of a corner lot such fence or wall shall be subject to the same requirements as for a corner side yard.
 - D. Retaining Walls. Retaining walls not to exceed six feet in height are permitted in all yards.
7. Section 22.48.180 of Title 22 authorizes the Director to grant a modification to yard or setback regulations only where topographic features, subdivision plans or other conditions create an unnecessary hardship or unreasonable regulation or make it obviously impractical to require compliance. The applicant's application does not provide justification for waiver of the required yard standards. There are no topographic features that require a wall of over six feet. The subdivision of the area follows or exceeds standard lot configurations and sizes. Complying with the Zoning Code requirements would not create hardship.

8. Sixteen opposition letters were received. Opposition letters stated concerns including the height, visual prominence, lack of justification pursuant to County Code 22.48.180, and the fact that the wall was built with no permits.

BASED ON THE FOREGOING, THE DIRECTOR CONCLUDES:

- A. That there are no topographic features, subdivision plans or other conditions that create an unnecessary hardship or unreasonable regulation or make it obviously impractical to require compliance with the yard requirements or setback lines on the subject property that would allow the Director to authorize modification of the Zoning Code requirements related to walls in required yard areas.

THEREFORE, the information submitted by the applicant does not substantiate the required findings for a Director's Review as set forth in Section 22.48.180 of Title 22.

DIRECTOR'S ACTION:

1. In view of the findings of fact presented above, yard modification request number RPP200900637 is DENIED.

BY: Mark Child DATE: 6/3/09

Mark Child
Supervising Regional Planner
Department of Regional Planning
County of Los Angeles



Los Angeles County
Department of Regional Planning

Planning for the Challenges Ahead



Jon Sanabria
Acting Director of Planning

April 27, 2009

James Coane
30 N. Raymond Ave. Ste. 611
Pasadena, CA 91103

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR REVIEW MATERIALS

Project: R2005-00187-(5)

Case: ROAK200800030

Address: 2288 & 2300 Villa Heights, 2199 Kinneloa Ranch

Dear Applicant:

The Department of Regional Planning is currently reviewing your request for a yard modification, and has determined that the project cannot be approved in its current form. Please submit modified site plans to conform to height requirements for fences and walls (Section 22.48.160) or withdraw your request by May 27, 2009.

Failure to disclose all pertinent information for consideration in the review of this case could result in delays, continuation of public hearings, new environmental analysis or additional costs. Additional materials may be required pending the outcome of consultation with other agencies.

We request that you expeditiously comply with the above requirements. If no activity occurs within 30 days of this letter, your case may be scheduled before a Hearing Officer for denial pursuant to Section 22.56.060 of the County Code.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Adam Thurtell at (213) 974-6443, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday or via email at athurtell@planning.lacounty.gov. Our offices are closed on Fridays.

Sincerely,

DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING
Jon Sanabria
Acting Director of Planning

Mark Child, Supervising Regional Planner
Zoning Permits I Section

Thurtell, Adam

From: Thurtell, Adam
Sent: Wednesday, June 03, 2009 3:24 PM
To: 'James Coane'
Subject: yard modification denial
Attachments: yard modification denial RPP200900637-5.pdf

James,

After giving this some thought and speaking with supervisors, I believe it is in everyone's best interest that the yard modification decision is made now. The decision will have to be a denial since we cannot justify approval of any plans that don't meet the yard requirements of County Zoning Code and it does you no good to have an extra two weeks; it would actually be to your detriment, for the following reasons:

1. a denial of the proposed plan is nearly identical to an approval of revised plans:
if we deny the submitted plans, we are in effect allowing a wall up to but not over 6 feet in height, since this is allowed by code and would not need a permit.
if we wait for more plans, we will only approve those plans if they meet code, so we would be approving plans that do not need approval. the outcome of these two instances are identical, and would require an appeal.
2. the more quickly the aforementioned happens, the more likely it is that any potential appeal of the yard mod could be heard alongside the oak tree permit at the July 8 hearing. this would reduce the possibility of the yard modification being separated from the oak tree permit, and this has been the stated desire of the applicant in conversations with DRP staff and County Counsel.

The attached document will also be sent by certified mail.

Adam Fonde Thurtell
Regional Planning Assistant II
County of Los Angeles
Dep. of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 974-6443

Letters of opposition R2005-00187-(5), RPP200900637

2256 North Villa Heights Road
Pasadena, California 91107

January 28, 2009

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

Re: 2288 North Villa Heights Road; Denial of Oak Tree Permit, Yard Modification and Building Permit (Case No. 2008-0030)

Dear Mr. Thurtell;

I have lived at 2256 North Villa Heights Road in an unincorporated area of Pasadena since January 2001. The area is a beautifully wooded neighborhood at the top of a hill called North Kinneloa Ranch. It is part of the Los Angeles National Forest where we own our homes both large and small, treasure our views of the mountains, take pride in our landscapes, and co-exist with the wildlife; similar to other hillside areas.

In late summer of 2007 both the applicant and the County was contacted regarding the illegal wall; but nothing happened until the County issued notices of violation. Then the applicants' architect filed for a retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification #2008-0030.

Unfortunately the owner of 2288 North Villa Heights, who also owns two adjoining properties, has displayed a blatant disregard for these values, the rights and safety of his neighbors and the laws of the County by building an up to a 10-foot high concrete block wall around the combined perimeter of his properties, which total approximately seven acres in area. This wall runs along the length of my property measuring nearly nine feet in height in my back yard. Additionally the wall has endangered 41 Oak trees (32 large enough to be protected by the County code) on the applicant's property, as well as numerous Oaks on the neighboring properties. The extreme height and obscene vastness of this concrete block wall violate the very essence of why my neighbors and I live in this part of the National Forest.

As I will detail below the applicant of 2288 has shown complete indifference to the laws of the County. These "after-the-fact" requests **should not be granted**.

Background:

Since my home was built in 1964 there has been no fences between my property and the applicants' property. The house on his property is not visible from my property. In approximately late 2004, when 2288 was sold to the current owner a five-foot wrought iron fence was constructed between our properties. This was sad to see but not a cause for concern as wrought iron or chain-link fence is common in this neighborhood, allowing for minimal intrusion on the oaks, natural migration of wildlife, and our precious shared views. However, in April of 2005 the applicant gated a turn-around at the end of North Villa Heights stating that because he owned several contiguous properties he had the right to do so. Most properties in this neighborhood extend to the middle of the road which is an easement. Now owning both sides the applicant felt he could terminate the turn-around that the community had used sense it's inception. His gate has caused difficulty in turning around, access issues due to un-typical subdivision of the parcels, and eliminated the frequent visual inspections of the Fire Department. My neighbors and I meet with the owner discussed the problems created for the neighborhood and tried to find a balance between his desires and ours to no avail. In late Summer 2007, large deliveries of cement blocks began arriving at the applicants' property, and the trenching began for the wall.

My first calls to the County regarding the trenching and construction of the wall were made in September of 2007. I also tried to contact the applicant regarding his intentions. He ignored me; never responded during the construction of the wall. Finally, in an e-mail dated November 7, 2007 Mr. Patrick Tarango from County Building and Safety stated:

"We have investigated these allegations and found that there are, in fact, walls being built in excess of Regional Planning's height requirements.

We have forwarded this information to Regional Planning's Code Enforcement Section. Until Regional Planning approves this project, we cannot issue any building permit for these walls. If Regional Planning does not approve these walls, we will begin our code enforcement process. Patrick Tarango"

No follow-up by the County seemed apparent as construction of the wall continued. My calls to Regional Planning grew more frequent and on December 6, 2007 I sent a desperate e-mail to Supervisor Antonvich's Senior Deputy, Ms. Nemer:

"I am in great need of your assistance in opening an investigation on a code violation in North Kinneloa Ranch –the top of Sierra Madre Villa Avenue, Los Angeles County Please assist me in moving this investigation forward. Even today the wall is still under construction. Mr. Ren should abide by the laws that govern all of us. This is a beautiful wooded area and deserves protection and those of us that live in the area need your help ..."

Ms. Nemer arranged a site visit, and shortly after this visit Building and Safety issued notices and a stop work order, while Regional Planning cited the County Oak Tree provisions and the lack of a variance for the excessive height of the wall. County staff described the wall as the "poster child of how not to build something".

Even with the County's stop work order, the wall continued to grow until it reached approximately 10 feet at its highest point. In fact, after the stop work order was issued, a three-foot extension of wrought iron was added to the top of the wall next to the gate. Finally, after a site visit from Mr. Dennis Tom, County Building and Safety, and two follow-up calls from Mr. Tom to the applicants architect the wrought iron was removed, and the work stopped. However, at this late date, the concrete block wall was up. Hani Sabboubeh, Regional Planning Assistant, reported to me that the architect intended to now file for a retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification for the wall. Deadlines passed and extensions were granted. (Mr. Sabboubeh and Mr. Tom can substantiate these delays and their need to follow-up with the applicant.)

Reality:

The wall next to my property is not safe. It exhibits large cracks in the cement blocks, gaps in the construction, footings that are either questionable (approximately 3 inches in depth) or non-existent (where large limbs intersect the foundation, which needs to support over 8 ½ feet of concrete wall). The wall has not been engineered to County standards nor did the County inspect it as the building progressed. It has been built in stages and around trees adding further to the unsightly nature and instability of the wall. Because of this shoddy, illegal construction, no one walks along the wall at my property, as it appears to be leaning and bowing. My family, guests, pets, and I are at risk that this wall may fall. Since the wall is built up-hill from my home the excessive height actually seems even taller than my house, most certainly affecting the value of my home. The view of the mountains has been replaced by a view of the concrete wall from my kitchen, family room and two bedrooms. The amounts of light and sun have changed with the addition of the wall. The workmanship was sloppy and has left me with expensive problems and hazards to correct.

Following a heavy rainfall in January of 2008, four large holes were drilled into the wall to allow for drainage from the applicants side. The wall has re-routed rain runoff directly onto my downhill drive way and during this same heavy rain of January 2008 the re-routed rain carried mud into my driveway, carport and under the foundation of my home. I am also concerned about topsoil being carried away from the base of several large trees on my property, which has resulted in the exposure of their root systems. This erosion is different than in the past years, even compared to the heavy rainfall of 2005.

The engineering of the drainage in this area has been altered. The applicants' contractor has attempted to deal with re-channeling the runoff, but once again it is without engineering or grading. This work is on hold.

In May of 2008 I sent a certified letter to the applicant describing the personal damage his wall had done to my property. Another letter was sent three months later. And now, more than nine months later, the damage has only marginally been addressed, even after the applicants' architect insisted that it would be taken care of.

Arguments:

In spite of repeated contacts from County officials, the applicant, Huixian Zhang or Mr. Ren, insisted on the construction of the wall, even after a stop work order was issued. The wall was built at slightly over 6 feet and then the applicant demanded the height be increased. The applicant did not show any concern for the Oaks or rights or safety of his neighbors. Most of the wall remains out of the vision of the applicant when he is home, yet we neighbors look daily at this over height wall that has dramatically affected the value of our properties.

The Architect, James Coane has an existing track record of requesting "retroactive Oak Tree Permits"; a record of build it – see if you get caught – and, if you do, request the required permits. For example, a retroactive permit was requested on October 16, 2007 and the architect made an appearance in front of the Regional Planning Commission to get a retroactive oak tree permit for a second story home addition at 1964 Midlothian Drive in Altadena. (Project no. R2005-03409-(5) and Oak Tree Permit no. 200500073) In addition, the he is currently requesting a retroactive permit for 2340 North Villa Heights Road, a job he took over in the fall of 2005 and filed for the retroactive permit when complaints were made. As a licensed professional Mr. Coane is required to know and follow the laws that are meant to govern us all.

In filing the Zoning and Subdivision Application, Mr. Coane – checked a statement: "I certified that all encroachment and removal of oak tree(s) will take place **only** on property owned by the applicant or for which the applicant has an easement." This is simply not true. As an example, there is a large oak at 2330 North Villa Heights Road, inches from the wall. This statement was checked and signed after the wall was up, and the wall had already encroached on the neighbor's oak tree.

Similarly the applicants' contractor, Mr. Steve Pendleton, holds a state license, hired workers to build a wall without an Oak Tree Permit, a building permit, or a yard modification for the additional height of the wall. A licensed contractor knows he needs a permit to work near Oak trees, knows he needs a building permit, and knows that a variance is necessary for excessive wall height. Even in gating the turn around permits should have been pulled for the paving next to the oak.

As for the 10-foot wall height, the applicant has not demonstrated the Code-required justification for granting a modification under County Code 22.48.180. There is no requisite "unnecessary hardship", "unreasonable regulation", or "obviously impractical" conditions needed to absolve him of this responsibility for the yard modification. The only attempt at justification is a statement made by the applicants' arborist who states the owner built the wall "to keep a large bear out of his property" which "was coming onto his property for water or to forage".

A bear is not unique to the applicants' property. Many of us experience the bear passing through our property, getting into our ponds, waterfalls, fountains, or swimming in our pools or spas during certain months of the year. Nor is it unusual to find our trees striped of fruit (especially plums and avocados) or that our trash has been raided. Furthermore while, the height of this wall will not guarantee that a bear would stay out of his property, what it may do is cause the bear to feel trapped in my side yard if I surprise a bear in my trashcans, 30 feet away from my back door or right next to my carport and 15 feet from the wall. This scenario is not possible at 2288, as the wall is never close to his home. Thus, the wall poses a risk to my safety while simultaneously failing to accomplish its intended goal.

It is also not a proper reason for the requested modification for the applicant to state that he is protecting his children. It is not unique to have small children in our neighborhood, and raising children in our neighborhood does not create a special circumstance to grant a wall height variance; while we all wish to protect our children, we are not building 10-foot walls.

Simply stated, we are being forced to live with a 10-foot, illegally constructed wall for which there is no legal justification.

Requested Actions:

The Regional Planning Commission should:

1. Deny request for Yard Modification for a 10-foot wall.
2. Deny the Oak Tree Permit
3. Order applicant to remove the wall; and
4. Grant a revised Oak Tree Permit that requires the applicant to correct the damage done to oak trees on his and neighbors' properties as he removes the wall.

According to the applicants' arborist, the damage done to the oak trees will not be fully know for years to come, and he has stated the damages done to the oaks must be corrected.

The corrective action order by the Commission should include the following:

- Follow the Arborist mitigation steps: remove the fill soil over the root zones and mulch.
- Use a contractor who is familiar with trees, and have the work supervised by a certified arborist or registered consulting arborist.
- Attempt to mitigate root damage. (You have my permission to use the compressed air discussed in the arborists report and I think that other neighbors will agree as well.)
- The shallow feeder roots of the oaks can be protected during removal of the soil and wall in the manner laid out by the arborist: prepare wheelbarrow routes protected by mulch and boards.
- Use the tools recommended by the arborist.

The removal of the wall can be done in conjunction with the remediation of the oak trees. In fact, the remediation can be much more effectively done after the removal of the wall. A licensed arborist can and should supervise the work as the applicants' arborist recommends

This wall has changed our environment, the value of our properties, and the quality of our lives. My home is my only significant asset. I can insure it for damages due to fire, home invasion and earthquake, but the County must insure that our laws will be upheld and followed. To allow such disregard for the laws that have served us all would truly be an offense. I implore you to recommend that the Regional Planning Commission deny the request for the Oak Tree Permit and yard modification.

Please see the attached photographs. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rhonda Stone

Thurtell, Adam

From: Ways [ways@aol.com]
Sent: Sunday, January 25, 2009 2:33 PM
To: Ways; Thurtell, Adam
Subject: Re: permit #2008-00030

Resend with subject header.....

In a message dated 01/25/09 14:31:34 Pacific Standard Time, Ways writes:

Dear Mr. Thurtell,

I am writing with regard to permit **#2008-00030** that has been retroactively requested for a wall constructed at 2288 N. Villa Heights Road in Pasadena. The height and visual prominence of the wall in question is not conducive to maintaining the beauty and value of our neighborhood. If permitted, it will establish a precedent for other similar walls to be built.

Further, it is troubling to learn that the owner, contractor, and architect of the construction in question did not see fit to file for permits before construction. It is not logical that there would be any reason for not seeking permits unless they were concerned about the county's unlikely approval.

As such, I am strongly recommending the county's denial of this permit and request that the construction be removed.

Sincerely,
Wendy Alden
3303 Villa Mesa Road
Pasadena CA 91107

Thurtell, Adam

From: Michael Coppess [michaelcoppess@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Friday, January 23, 2009 10:55 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Cc: Rhonda Stone
Subject: #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd.

Dear Mr. Thurtell:

I urge that the above-referenced variance request be denied and that all codes and regulations governing fence heights and design and oak tree preservation be enforced. I live in the Sierra Madre Villa neighborhood south of the affected property. The area is in the foothills and has an unusual amount of natural oak woodland and viewsapes to the mountains. The findings necessary to support a variace cannot be made. There is no reasonable justification for an 8 to 10 feet block wall around any residence, let alone one in the unique natural setting in which our neighborhood sits. There is no reason to believe that such a high fence is needed to preserve any property right of the owner/builder.

I urge that the county deny the subject variance request to avoid creating any precedent for building such walls and impairing protected oak trees.

Michael J. Coppess
1577 Old House Rd.
Pasadena, California 91107

This message and any attachments are intended only for the use of the addressee and may contain information that is privileged and confidential. Dissemination of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify the sender by e-mail or by telephone and delete the message and all attachments from your system.

Thurtell, Adam

From: Carol Dinniene Mispagel [scmispagel@sbcglobal.net]
Sent: Friday, January 23, 2009 9:21 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Subject: 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd. Pasadena

Dear Mr. Adam Thurtell,

We are appalled at the wall which has been built, without permit, around the property in our neighborhood at 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd. Not only is this wall unattractive, it is dangerous, as it is not built to code and not reinforced, and it was built after an order to stop work was issued from the county. Now, it is our understanding, the owner is requesting a retroactive permit for the work he completed after being told not to. Allowing such a permit to be issued sends the wrong message to all residents. It takes away any authority the county had for requiring permits, and it sets a bad precedent. If approved, it is saying, "ignore cease work orders and apply for a retroactive permit".

We Sean and Carol Mispagel, request the 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 their legal regulations and procedures thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. **Do not grant the Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification needed for wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd.**

Thank you,

Carol and Sean Mispagel

3480 Fairpoint St. Pasadena, CA 91107

626-791-2735

Thurtell, Adam

From: BILL BERG [bergwh@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 15, 2009 3:29 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Subject: Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification

Dear Mr. Adam Thurtell,

We, Paula and Bill Berg, request the 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 their legal regulations and procedures thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. **Do not grant** the **Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification needed for wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd.**

Asking permission is harder than asking forgiveness. That is, it is easier to say no to permission and harder to say no to forgiveness. BUT if you say yes to forgiveness this justifies everyone from breaking the law. If you allow this with little to no punitive damages it will happen over and over again, we might as well not have building permits.

What's the point of the "Oak Tree permit" if you can just damage the soil so much the Oak Trees die and must be removed anyway. This must be punishable not just monetarily but with jail time or community service.

Thank you,
Bill Berg

Thurtell, Adam

From: Eugene Thomas [kateollie@earthlink.net]
Sent: Monday, January 12, 2009 5:00 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Subject: Permit For Wall

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Red Category

County Contact information:

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

e-mail address: AThurtell@planning.lacounty.gov
(213) 974-6443

For your convenience here is a brief statement for your consideration to copy and send to the above e-mail address. Thanks again

Date:

We, Eugene & Catherine Thomas/3232 Barhite, Pasadena, 91107 _____, request the 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 their legal regulations and procedures' thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. **Do not grant** the Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification needed for wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd.

Thank you,
Eugene & Catherine Thomas

Thurtell, Adam

From: Alex Hansen [ahansen1@gmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, January 11, 2009 2:38 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Subject: Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification for wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Red Category

January 11, 2009

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

Re.: Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification for wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd.

Dear Mr. Thurtell:

We understand that an application for a retroactive permit to encroach on 32 protected coast live oak trees including a retroactive yard modification permit to build a block wall, 8 to 10 feet high around the perimeter of approximately 7 acres at the top of North Villa Heights Road in Pasadena, CA has been filed with your office.

We request the 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 their legal regulations and procedures, thereby ensuring consideration is given to the environment, community, and the safety and integrity of construction requiring permits.

It is unconscionable to think that our neighbors are now looking at an 8 -10 foot block wall as a result of the blatant non-compliance approach by the property owner and state licensed professionals. The wall has restricted and in some cases eliminated views of the mountains and landscaped horizons, damaged oak trees on both sides of the wall, altered the natural movement of wildlife, dramatically changed our wooded environment, affected property values, altered the natural water flow down the mountain causing serious ponding and water erosion, is unsafe and unsightly. It violates the very essence of why many of us wanted to live in this special neighborhood.

Should the County allow walls and structures to be built with such blatant disregard for the neighboring community and legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. Do not grant the Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification needed for wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd. Pasadena, CA.

Sincerely,

Alexander E Hansen
Renu Bhat-Hansen
3463 Vosburg Street
Pasadena, CA 91107-1245
Home: 626 791 3307
Work: 626 737 0382
Fax: 626 551 0012
ahansen1@gmail.com
bhathansen@gmail.com

Thurtell, Adam

From: Dr. Nurit K. Cohen [drnkcohen@earthlink.net]
Sent: Friday, January 09, 2009 7:50 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Subject: N. Villa Height Road wall.
Attachments: image001.gif

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Red Category

Date: 1/8/2009

We William and Nurit Cohen, request the 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 their legal regulations and procedures' thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. **Do not grant the Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification needed for wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd.**

Thank you,

Nurit Cohen, Ph.D.
William A. Cohen, Ph.D.

Thurtell, Adam

From: Carina Walker [carinas@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, January 06, 2009 1:26 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Cc: ronilee33@aim.com
Subject: wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: Red Category

Date: January 6, 2009

We, Carina and Steve Walker, request the after-the-fact permission for wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd. be denied and an order be given to have it removed. The County of Los Angeles must enforce their legal regulations and procedures¹ thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County.

Do not grant the Retroactive Oak Tree Permit and yard modification needed for wall #2008-00030, 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd.

Thank you,

Carina and Steve Walker
2007 Villa Hts Road.

Thurtell, Adam

From: River Jiang [river_jiang@idg.com.cn]
Sent: Tuesday, December 30, 2008 11:51 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Cc: hugo_shong@idg.com; blackwhitebird96@gmail.com
Subject: FW: 2288 N. Villa Heights, Pasadena Building Code Violations

Dear Mr. Thurtell,

We, the homeowner at 2340 Villa Heights Road, Pasadena, request the after-the-fact permission for the WALL #2008-00030, 2288 N. VILLA HEIGHTS ROAD BE DENIED and an order be given to have it removed. The County of Los Angeles must enforce their legal regulations and procedures' thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County.

DO NOT GRANT the RETROACTIVE OAK TREE PERMIT AND YARD MODIFICATION NEEDED FOR WALL #2008-00030, 2288 N. VILLA HEIGHTS RD.

Thank you,

Hugo Shong and Luo Yan

River Jiang, Executive Assistant, sent on behalf of Hugo Shong

Jaime & Maribel Suarez
2154 Villa Heights Rd.
Pasadena, CA, 91107

December 30, 2008

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

e-mail address: AThurtell@planning.lacounty.gov
(213) 974-6443

RE: 2288, 2199 North Villa Heights Rd, Pasadena, CA, 91107

Dear Mr. Thurtell:

We, Jaime and Maribel Suarez, property owners and residents of the area known as North Kinneloa Ranch, hereby request the after-the-fact permission for the wall recently constructed on the above referenced property **be denied** and an order be given to have it removed. The County of Los Angeles must enforce their legal regulations and procedures' thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. **DO NOT GRANT** the **RETROACTIVE OAK TREE PERMIT AND YARD MODIFICATION NEEDED FOR WALL #2008-00030, 2288 N. VILLA HEIGHTS RD.**

Thank you,

Jaime & Maribel Suarez
(626)794-2468

Date:12/30/2008

We John & Staci Howe (1906 North Country Lane, Pasadena, CA 91107), request the 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 their legal regulations and procedures' thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. **DO NOT GRANT** the **RETROACTIVE OAK TREE PERMIT AND YARD MODIFICATION NEEDED FOR WALL #2008-00030, 2288 N. VILLA HEIGHTS RD.**

Thank you,

John B. Howe + Staci D. Howe

Thurtell, Adam

From: Mike Simpson [mike@dustbrothers.com]
Sent: Monday, December 29, 2008 3:02 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Subject: RETROACTIVE OAK TREE PERMIT AND YARD MODIFICATION NEEDED FOR WALL # 2008-00030, 2288 N. VILLA HEIGHTS RD., PASADENA, CA 91107

Dear Mr. Thurtell

I am writing you because I understand that you will decide whether or not to grant after-the fact permits for the property at 2288 North Villa Heights Road, Pasadena, CA 91107 in regards to protected oak tree encroachment and the illegal construction of an oversized wall. **I plead with you to deny permission and ask that you order the wall to be removed.** The work done on this property was done in violation of local laws and to grant the after-the-fact permit would be to reward the property owner for these violations. While the illegal work was being performed, the County issued stop-work orders but the property owner blatantly ignored these orders and continued anyway. Additionally, the Regional Planning and Building and Safety Departments have both cited the owner for issues pertaining to the wall.

The County of Los Angeles must enforce their legal regulations and procedures thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. **Do NOT GRANT the RETROACTIVE OAK TREE PERMIT AND YARD MODIFICATION NEEDED FOR WALL #2008-00030, 2288 N. VILLA HEIGHTS RD.**

Thank you,

Best,

Mike Simpson
1801 Country Lane
Pasadena, CA 91107

626-398-9669

Thurtell, Adam

From: djleinweber@gmail.com on behalf of David Leinweber [dleinweber@post.harvard.edu]
Sent: Monday, December 29, 2008 3:01 PM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Subject: 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd

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

Since this is such a busy time of year for us all -- here is a brief statement for your consideration to copy and send to the above e-mail address. I have learned our combined voices do make a difference Thanks again

Date:

We David Leinweber & Marguerite Moreno, request the 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 their legal regulations and procedures' thereby ensuring 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 legal regulations it would set a new standard that is detrimental to county residents. This would undermine the long standing permit process that has served LA County. **Do NOT GRANT the RETROACTIVE OAK TREE PERMIT AND YARD MODIFICATION NEEDED FOR WALL #2008-00030, 2288 N. VILLA HEIGHTS RD.**

Thank you,

David Leinweber, Ph.D

2070 Villa Heights Rd
Pasadena CA 91107

Thurtell, Adam

From: Jim Howe [jimh@ddwire.com]
Sent: Monday, December 29, 2008 8:30 AM
To: Thurtell, Adam
Cc: ronilee33@aim.com; 'Rudy J Tekippe'
Subject: Kinneloa Ranch Wall

Mr. Thurtell,

I had the opportunity over this last weekend to take a look at the wall that was erected by Rhonda Stone's neighbor, Guang Ren. As President of the local POA (North Kinneloa Ranch Property Owners Association), I would agree that the wall has not only damaged the neighboring properties, but has also caused harm to the association, due to its impact on existing private roads. As you know, drainage paths and turnarounds have been impacted by the erection of this wall.

Further, having built a new home in the association three years ago, I am very familiar with the process through which one must go to obtain the necessary entitlements for walls, structures, etc. It is not reasonable that one person should be able to circumvent these requirements in such an egregious manner. I've personally had to pull as many as three oak tree permits throughout our construction process, despite the fact that we never removed an oak, nor did we build as close to an oak as this wall currently sits. Should this wall be allowed to remain, we create a mockery of the system.

Finally, it appears to me that the structure is not sound. There are sections of the wall that break as the wall would otherwise intersect a tree and other portions that appear to be cobbled together, leaving gaps that are open from one side to the other.

Should you have any questions regarding the POA, feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jim Howe
President, NKRPOA

18 December 2008

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

Dear Mr Thurtell:

It has been called to my attention that a hearing by the Commissioners is planned for January 14, 2009 regarding the matter of the wall constructed around the property of 2288 Villa Heights Road, Pasadena, CA. This wall has reportedly been constructed without a permit and is in violation of the LA County code for such construction. Also, it impacts the health of numerous coast live oak trees, as reported in the Feb. 19, 2008, report "Oak Tree Report at 2288 N. Villa Heights, Pasadena(Los Angeles County)", prepared by Greg Applegate, ASCA, ASLA.

I reside at 2222 Kinneloa Ranch Road, Pasadena, and the 2288 N. Villa Heights property encircles my lot on three sides. In fact, my lot was split off of the former address in the late 1970's. Prior to the present owner's purchase of 2288 N. Villa Heights, there were no fences separating the properties except for a short line fence built to enclose our swimming pool, a bathroom garden bath wall and a short piece of fence with a pathway gate in the north east corner of my lot. Thus, the large common backyards of these two properties complemented each other by offering pathways that went from one lot to the other at several places. Furthermore, a beautifully designed and built stream with waterfalls and ponds flowed from the other property into mine. A recirculation pump on my property released flow above a waterfall and pond on the other property and created a flow that came across the property line into a final pond on my property. It was a truly beautiful arrangement and was in operation or operating condition for over 20 years.

The concrete block and stucco wall, described in the above report impacted me and my property value in a number of ways. It extends from the very northeast corner of my lot, along the entire east side and most of the way around the south side. In all, about half of my entire lot has been encircled by this illicit wall which cuts off half of our view. The wall was also built across the stream discussed above and destroys most of the aesthetic beauty the area once had. In addition to the aesthetic impacts, the wall has prevented access to most of the south side of my lot. This is important for the maintenance of my property, storage of goods and access for repair of infrastructure.

When I bought my property, the seller showed me the easements for the roadway on the south side. It was a cul-de-sac road that gave access to a relatively new home owned by Dan and Dooley Healy and a vacant lot that they also owned. It was explained to me that the lot could be separated and used to build another home served by the cul-de-sac street. A major portion of the street there was maintained by the homeowners association and used as a turn-around for vehicles that went down there. When the Healy properties were sold off to the owners of the present 2288 address, the buyers contended that they owned most of the cul-de-sac road and could fence it off, thereby denying use of the turnaround area and blocking access to most of my south side property. A fence and subsequently the concrete block wall were built to block such access. With all of these impacts, it is hard to say how much decrease in actual property value has been incurred, but I would estimate it at \$150,000 to \$200,000.

The following is a list of detrimental impacts that the wall has caused for my property. It is probably not complete but nevertheless gives the scope of its magnitude.

- Blocks our view to the east and much of it on the south
- Blocks our south side access(as discussed above)
- Blocks access to the turn-around discussed above, forcing many vehicles to back all the way up Kinneloa Ranch Road and/or to back into a neighbor's driveway
- Cuts our joint property stream in half, destroying much of the setting's beauty
- Left jagged concrete edge to the footings on my side of the wall
- Allowed mud to flow into the stream and fish pond at its end
- Required builders to cut a major portion of my lime tree off
- Left sharp edged fence post cut offs sticking up out of the ground on my side
- Did not match up with the top of my garden bath wall
- Did not match the design of my garden bath wall, so they do not appear to be congruent
- Eliminated two access footpath gateways, that were valuable for emergency evacuation
- Created a pocket in the SE corner of my property that does not drain
- Excludes historic access of deer to our stream area and lower lot
- Has confined coyotes that then howl for hours trying to get out
- Possibly endangers the safety of occupants of my property in that the wall foundation was obviously not professionally engineered and is too narrow to support a wall as high as was built
- Has impacted the health and appearance of oak trees on my property and adjacent to it
- Creates hundreds of linear feet of bare wall that requires plants and irrigation water to look aesthetically acceptable

In the spirit of due respect for county property owners' rights to make improvements to their properties, it is obvious that a wall such as this should not have been built. The normal planning process of getting a permit and discussing the design with people impacted by it before starting construction was not followed. I hereby request that after-the-fact permission for the wall be denied and an order given to have it removed.

I clearly recall that when we built our home in the late 1970's, we had to closely conform to the permit process for not only the structure but also the groundcover and drainage. These steps took time and money for an owner but resulted in an end product that is congruent with the neighborhood and environmentally in balance. If the County now allows walls and structures to be built with such blatant disregard for the neighboring community and well-known legal regulations it would set a new standard that is very detrimental to county residents. It would make a mockery of the long held, valid permit process that has served LA County so well for so long.

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

Home phone: 626 798 0172

Cell phone: 626 893 2735

2020 WINDOVER ROAD
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA 91007

December 28, 2008

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.

Dear Mr. Thurtel:

I am a homeowner at 2020 Windover Road, Pasadena, California. I have lived peacefully and without incident at this address since 1989. The north border of my property is adjacent to the property located at 2288 N. Villa Heights Road.

On or around August 27th 2007, I noticed that construction materials were being delivered and assembled in piles next to the existing black colored chain link fence that runs along the border which separates my property from 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd. I saw some workers at the site and asked them if construction along the existing fence was planned. They did not answer my questions, but they all departed the site within the hour of my questioning. I then called the Los Angeles County office of building permits to inquire if the property owner of 2288 N. Villa Heights Rd. had a building permit. I was told that no permit had been applied for, issued or granted and that no building permit of any kind had been issued for this property in over 10 years.

Approximately two weeks later, construction began on the wall that is now present. I again asked the workers if there was an L.A. County issued construction permit for this wall. Again they did not answer, but this time they continued to work. I then went to the County Building offices on Baldwin Avenue in Arcadia and inquired as to the existence of a permit for this construction. I was told again that there was no permit on file, and that no building permit had been applied for at 2288 N. Villa Heights Road for over 10 years. The county employee said that any work being done would be against the law. I told the woman who was working there that day that if they sent an inspector out they could see for themselves that unauthorized construction was taking place. A couple weeks later, when the wall reached 6 feet tall I went back to the County offices in Arcadia and inquired again about a building permit. I was told that no permit had been applied for or issued. The worker behind the desk offered to take my name and phone number, which I gave, and she said that someone from the County would be calling me regarding my questions and complaints. No call ever came, but incredibly the wall continued to grow! This wall is now from 8' to 10' tall on my side of the property line.

I photographed the changes that occurred before, during and after construction. *(Please see the attached file)* A once unobstructed view of the San Gabriel Mountains has been tarnished, by the building of this concrete block wall. In addition, the wall has been built close to several trees on my property and there is the possibility that this will lead to permanent injury and death of these trees. This wall was built right along side a perfectly maintained 6' chain link wire fence, a fence that allowed the deer to pass safely as they used to do. The deer are now gone. Additionally I now have to pay my gardener to use his leaf blower to try to keep the area between the wire fence and the concrete block wall free of dead leaves that will become a fire hazard if allowed to accumulate.

Access to my property on the northern border by firefighters and law enforcement has been seriously obstructed and this is a real and serious safety issue; not just for me but for all of the neighbors who are affected by this wall. The natural rain water runoff has been permanently altered and will likely lead to flooding and possibly mudslides during heavy rains. This wall also has changed the way the wind (or breeze) would pass down over my property. Finally, the value of my property has been diminished by this unsightly and illegal barrier.

I am urging the County not to grant any permits, variance or mitigation for this wall or for the damage done by it. I believe the only proper course is to demand that this wall be safely and permanently removed.

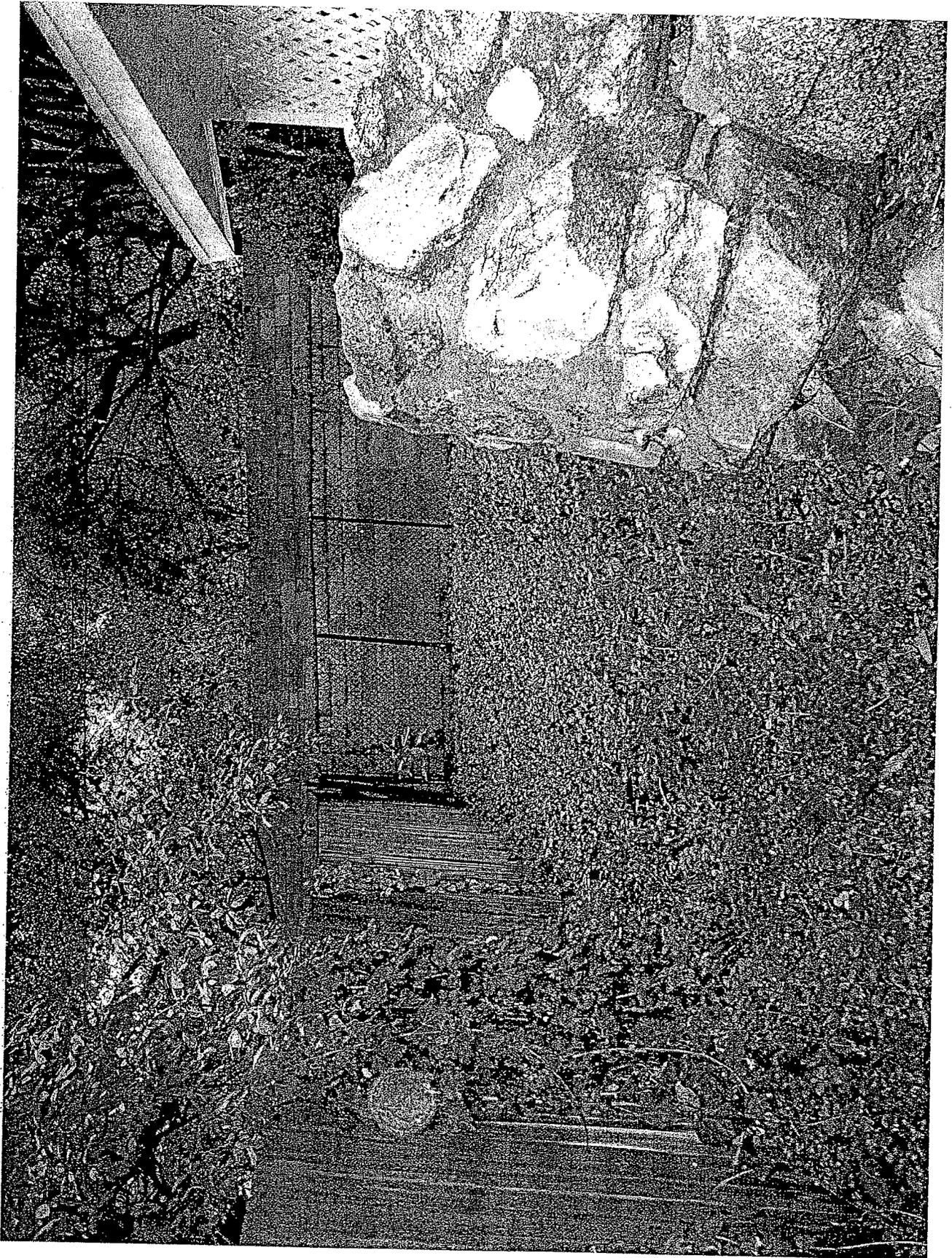
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Alan J. Fisher".

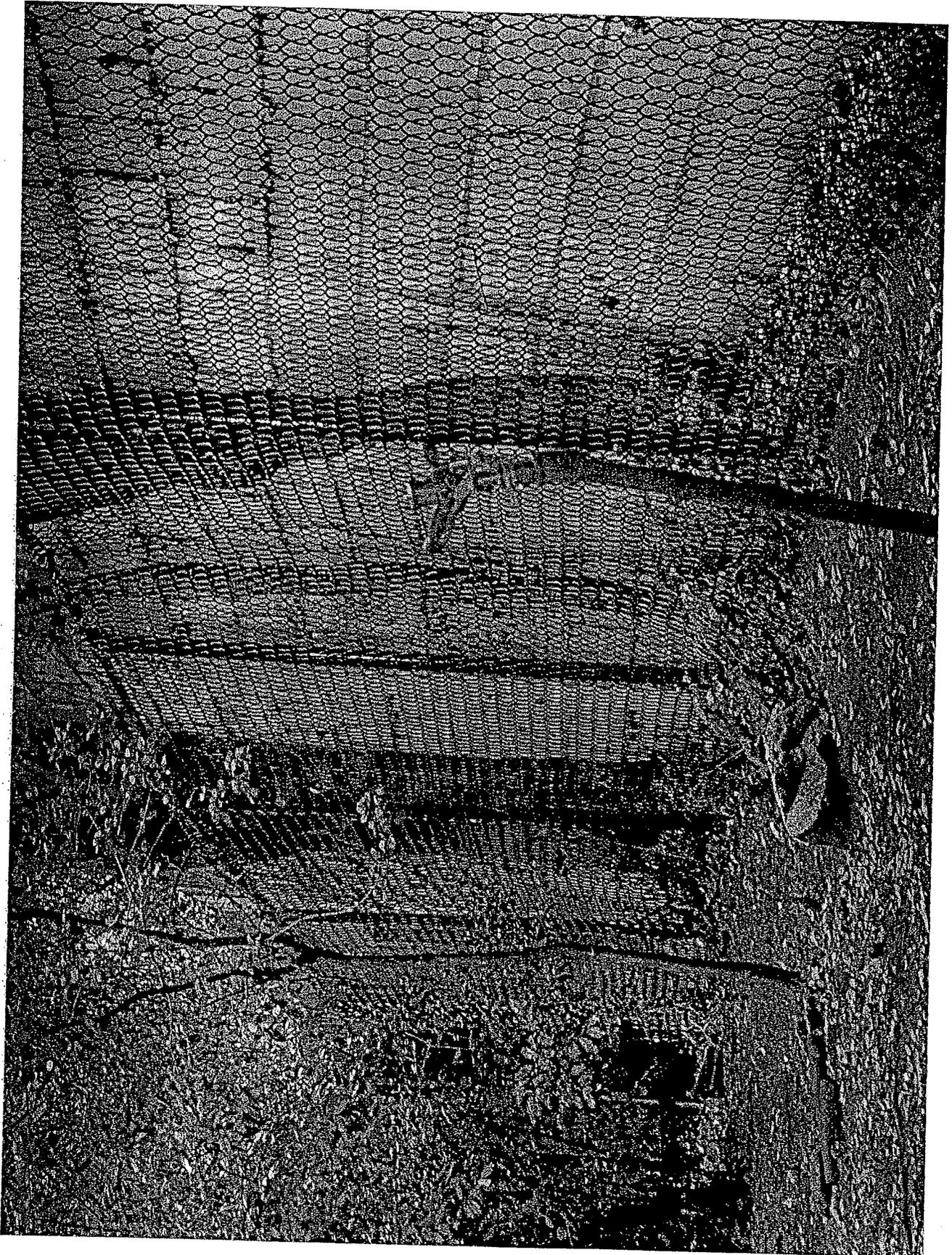
Alan J. Fisher, MD

Attachments: 14 photos

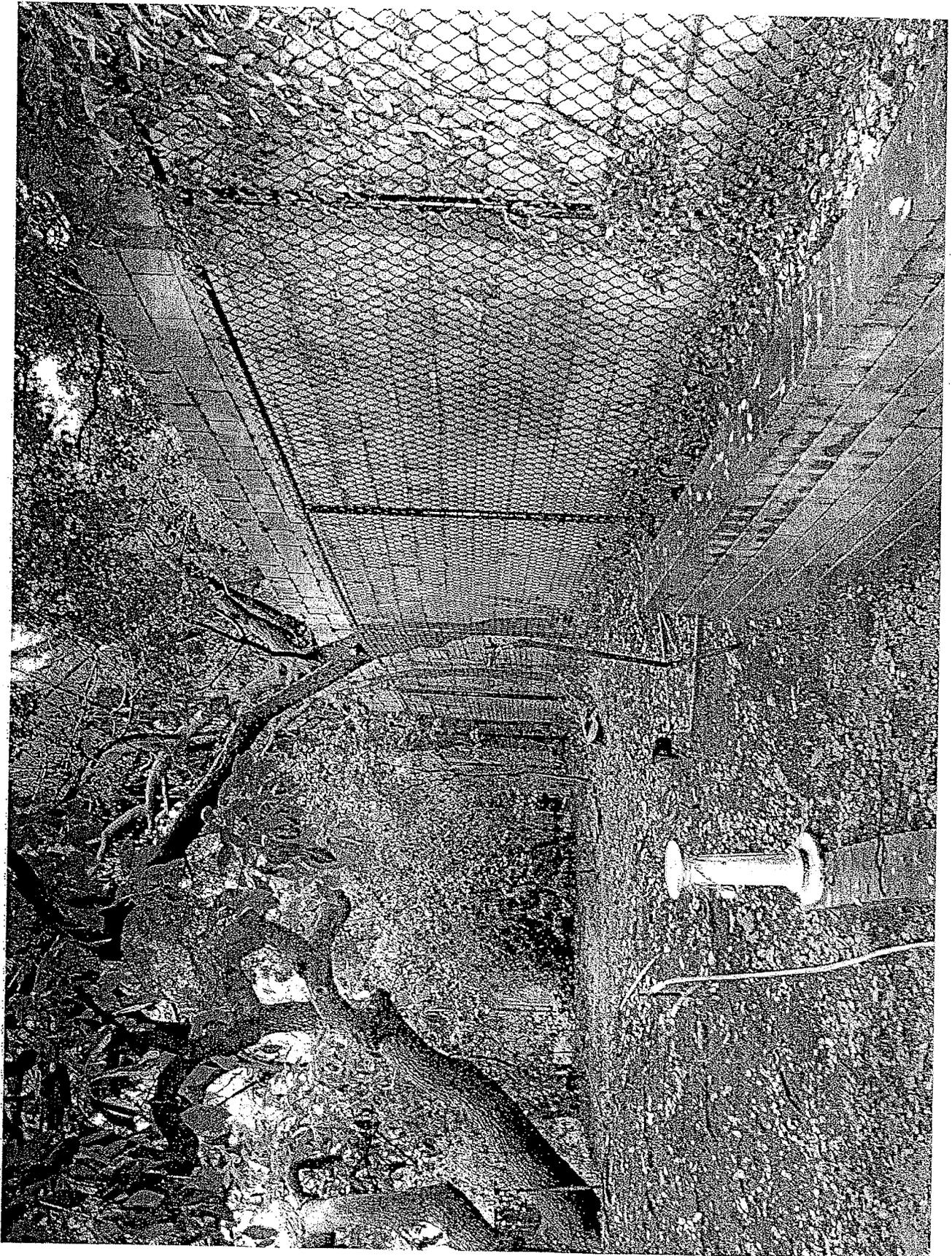


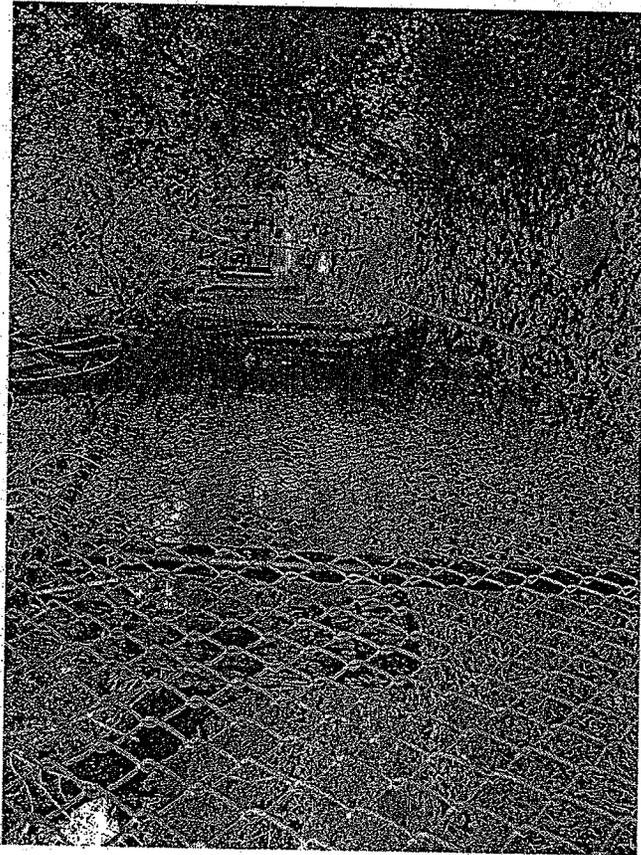


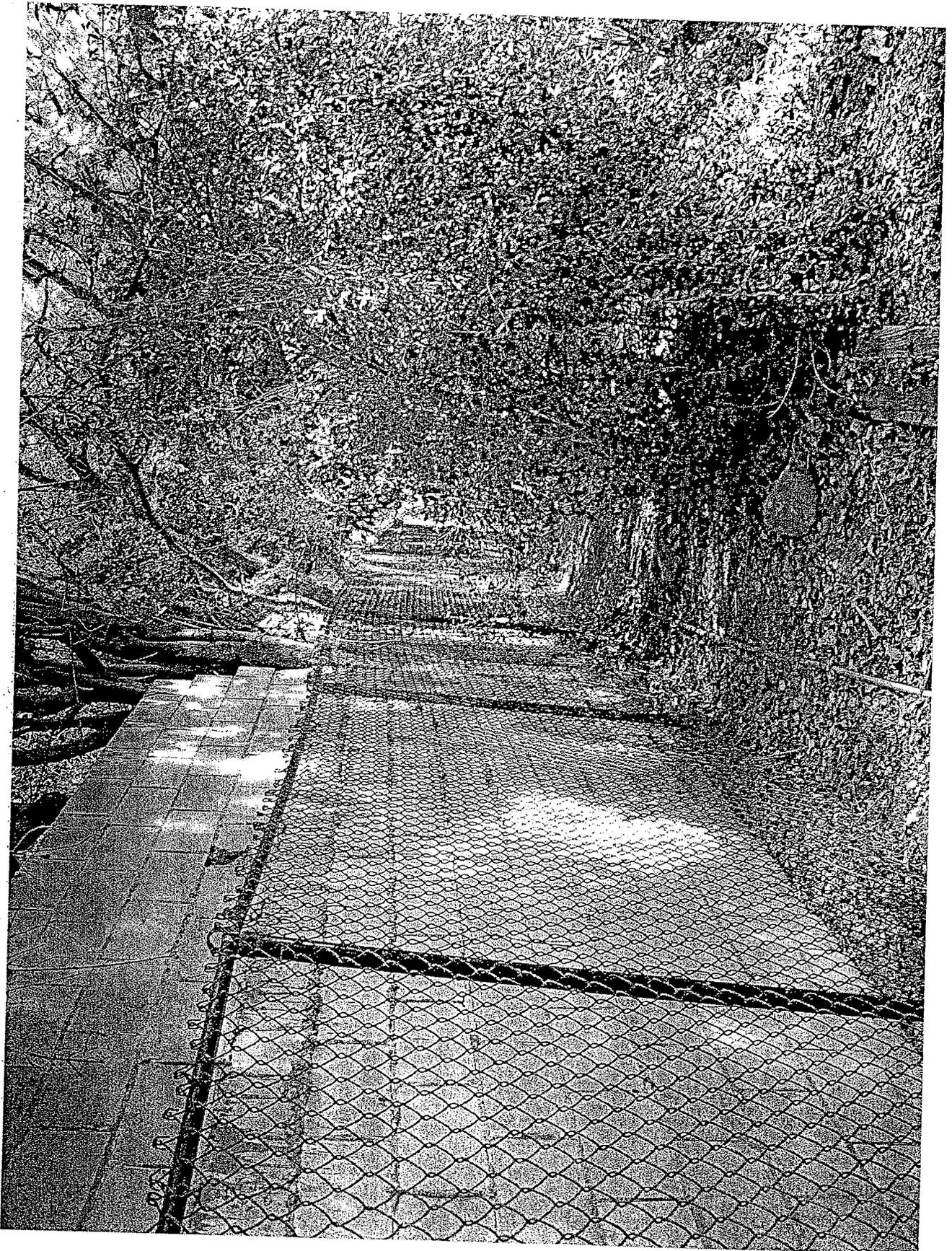




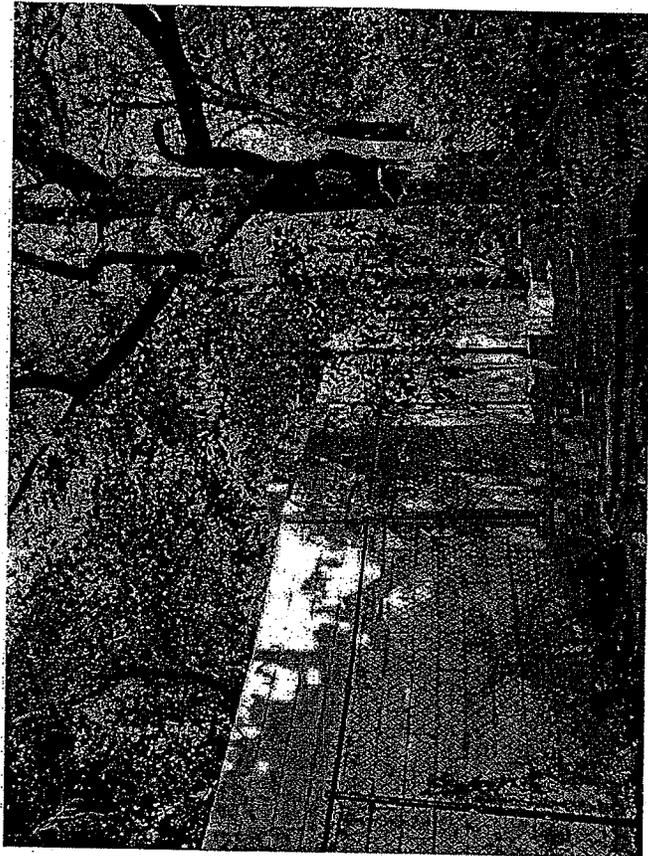




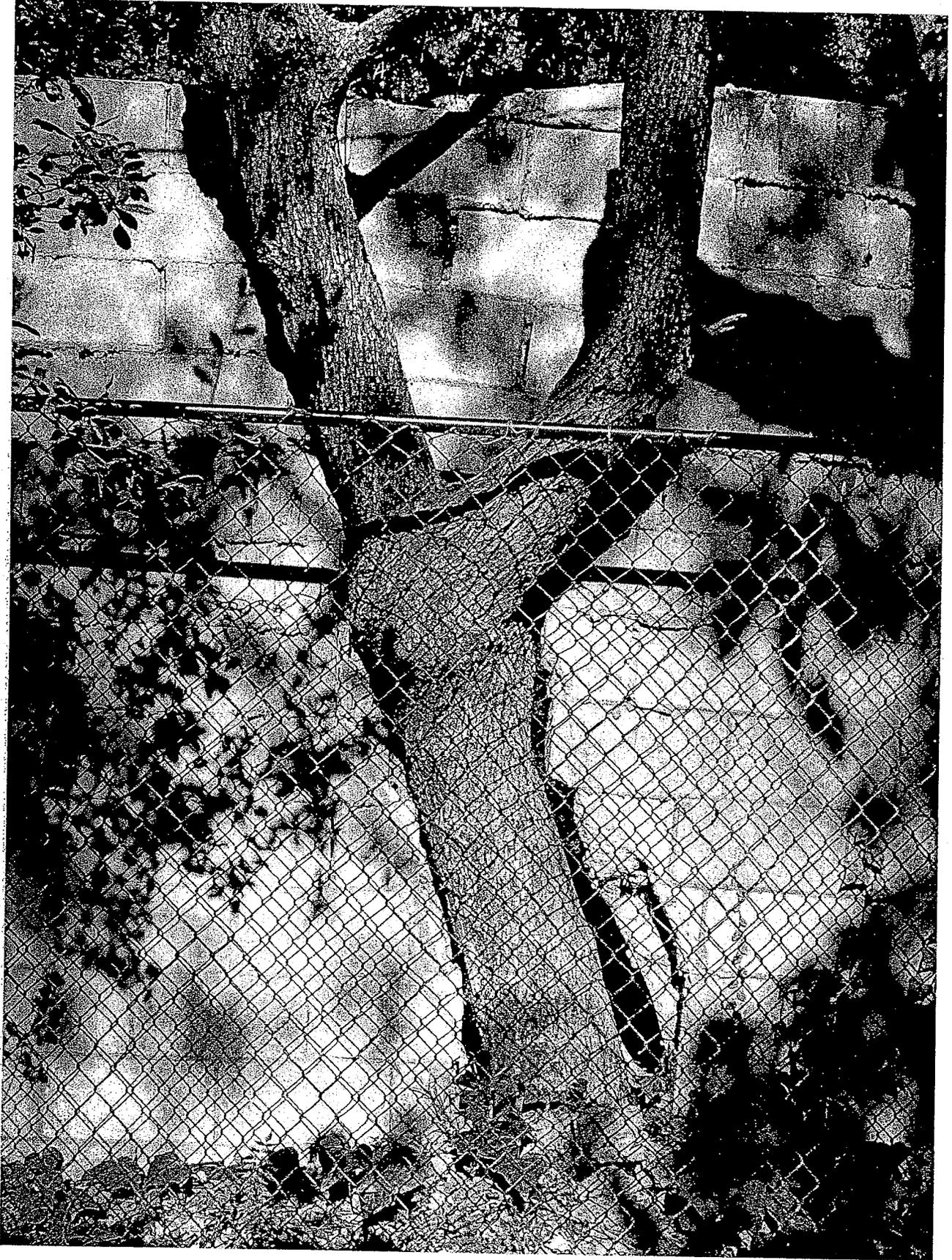


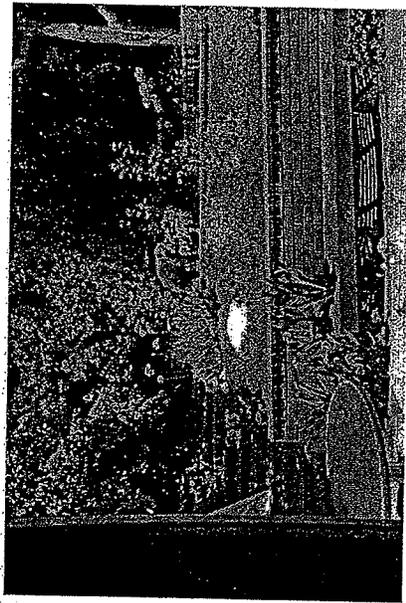








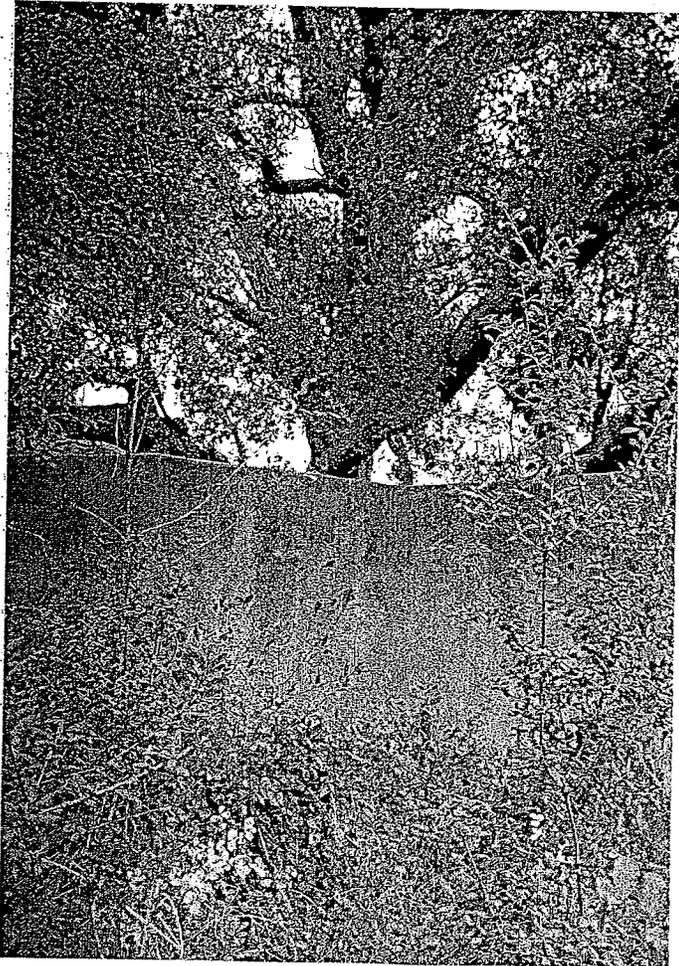
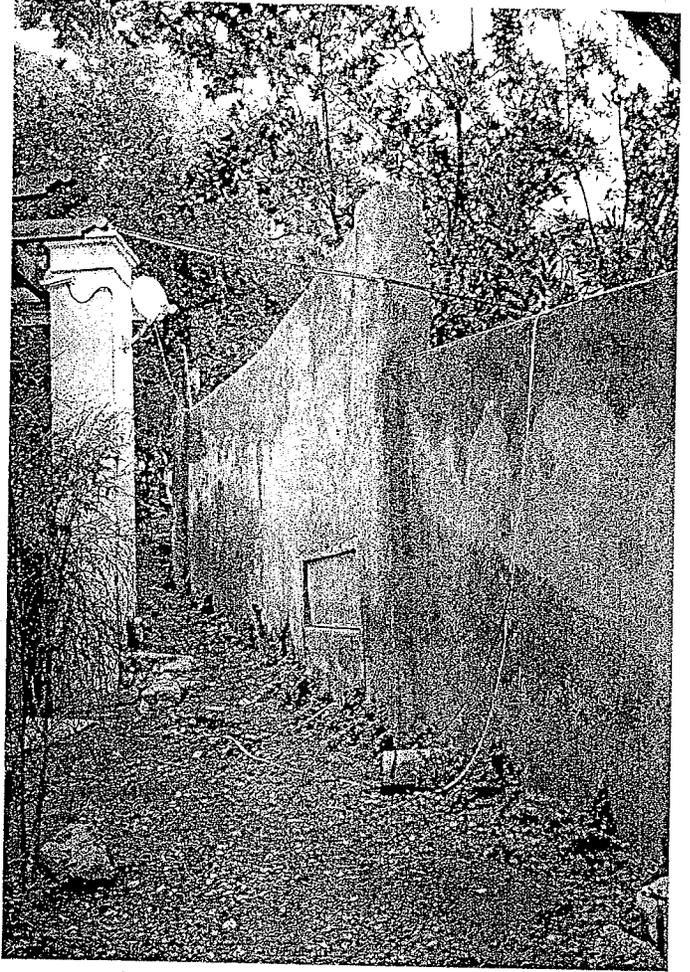
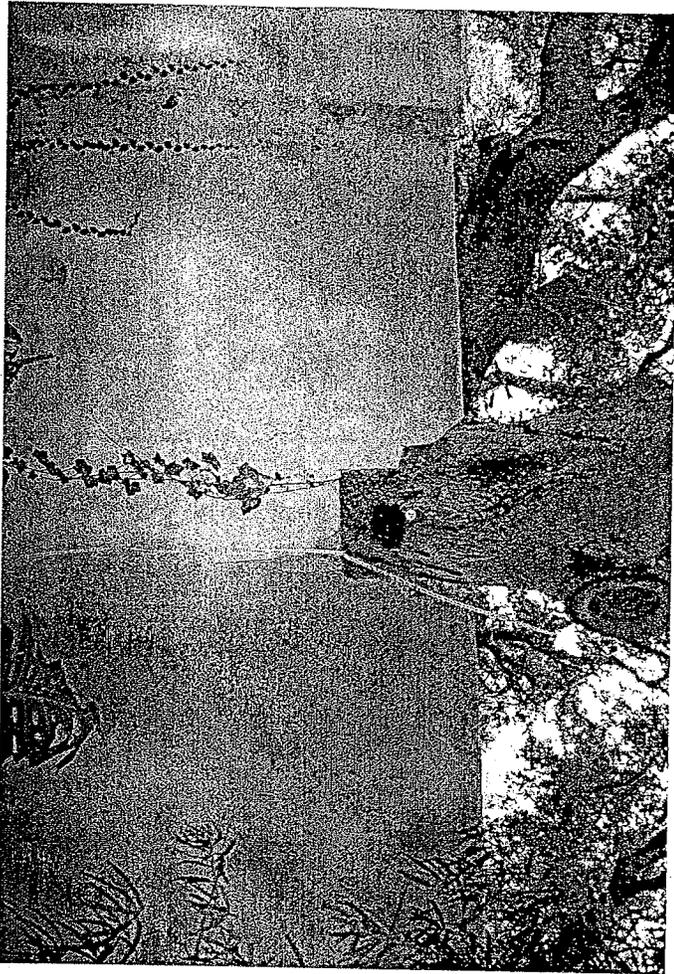


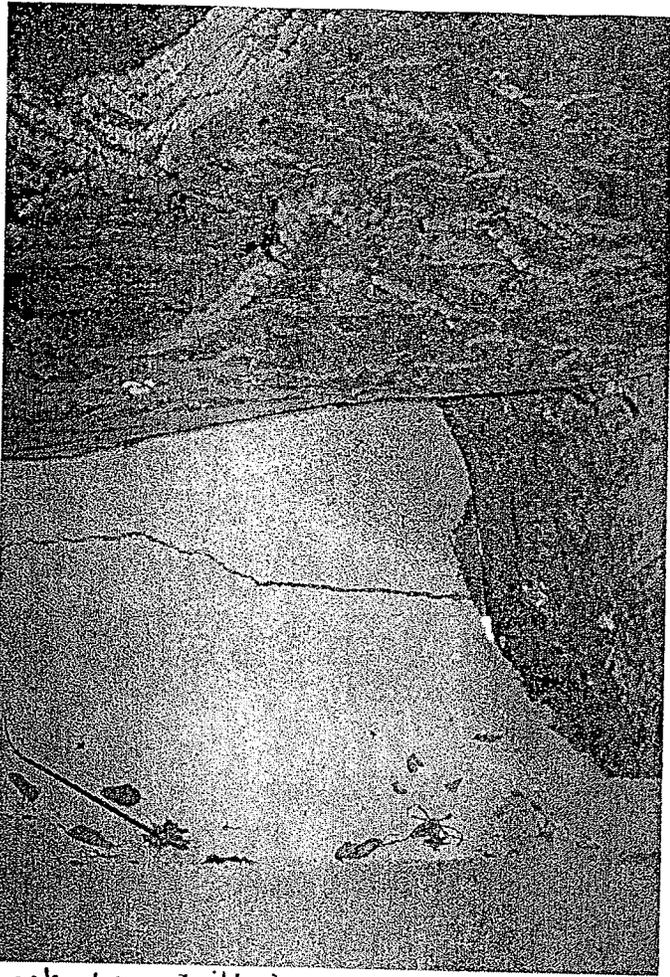




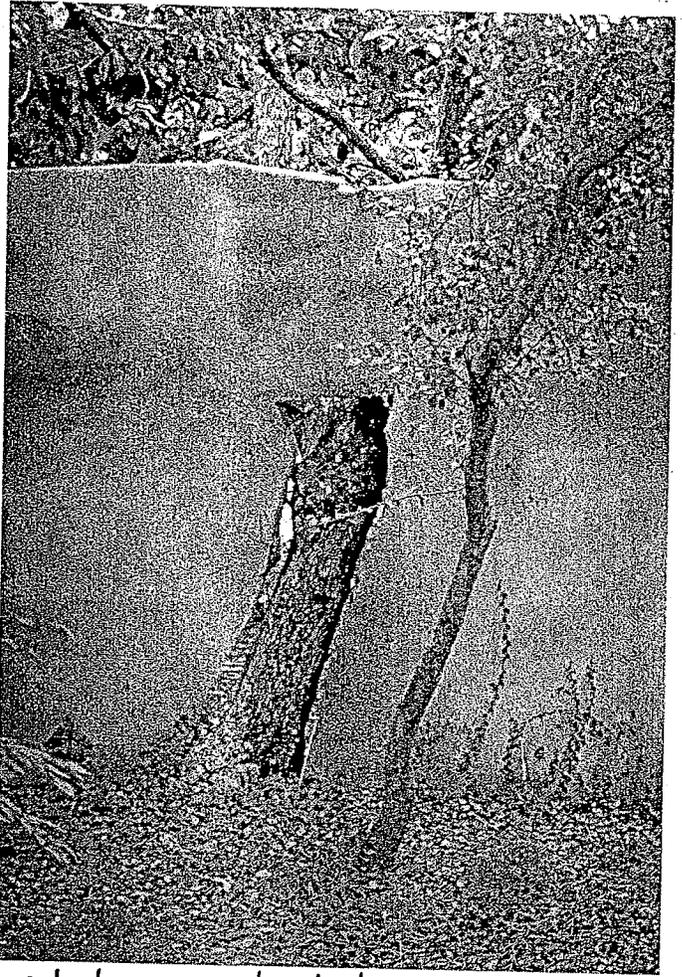
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oak tree built in





↻ oak tree built in



↻ oak tree sandwiched



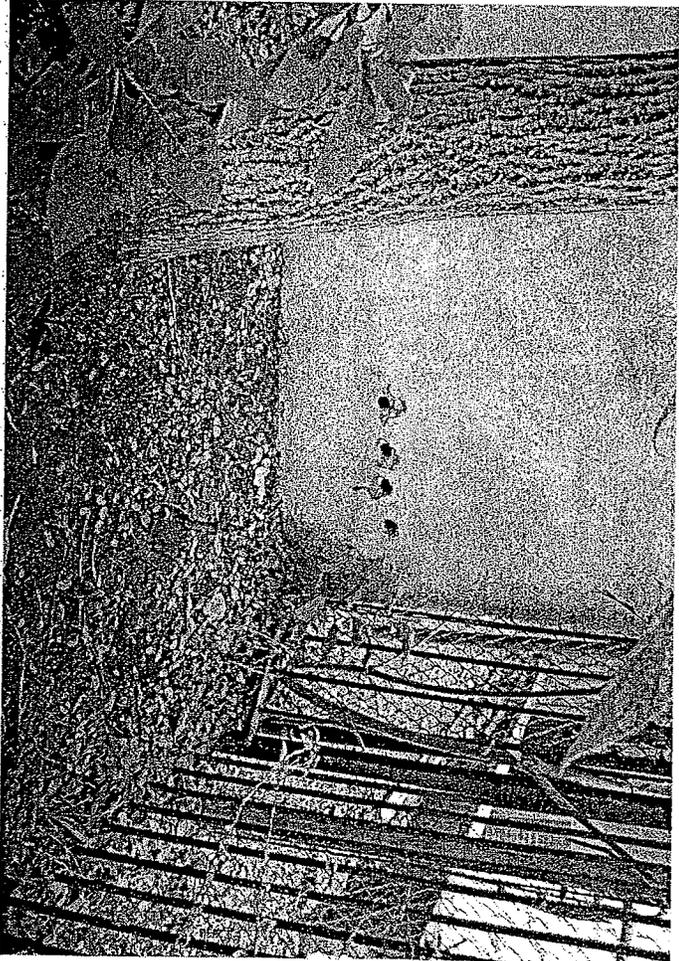
facing neighbors - no stucco



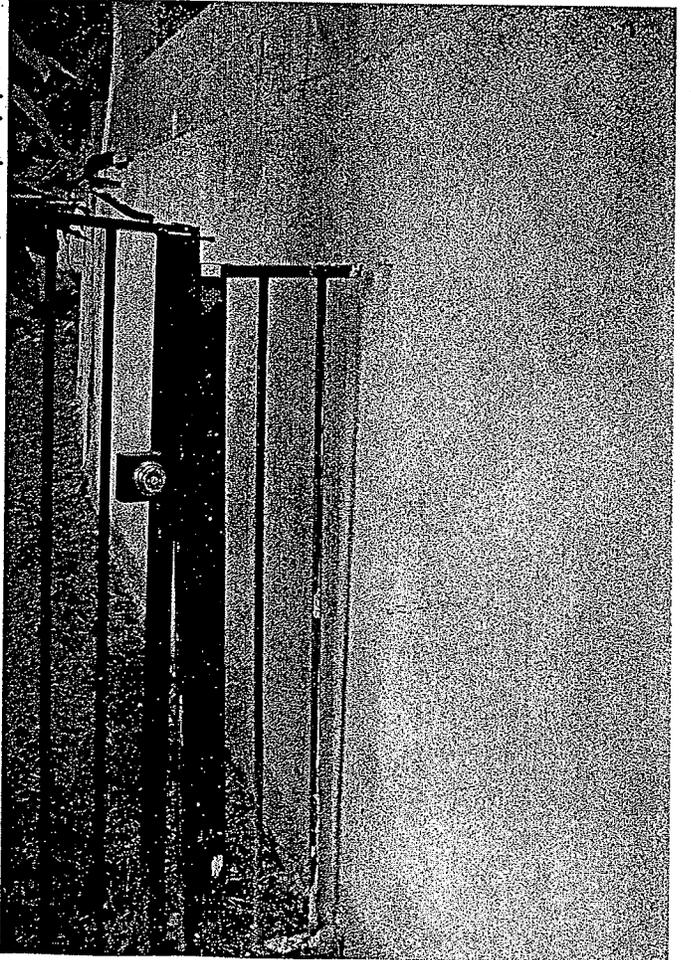
facing neighbors - no stucco

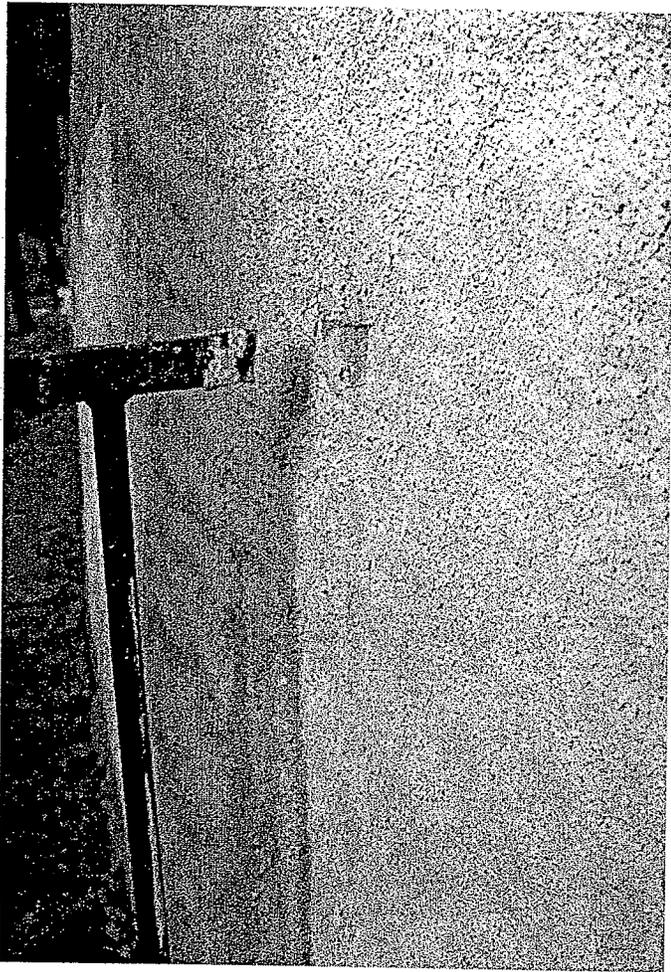


drainage

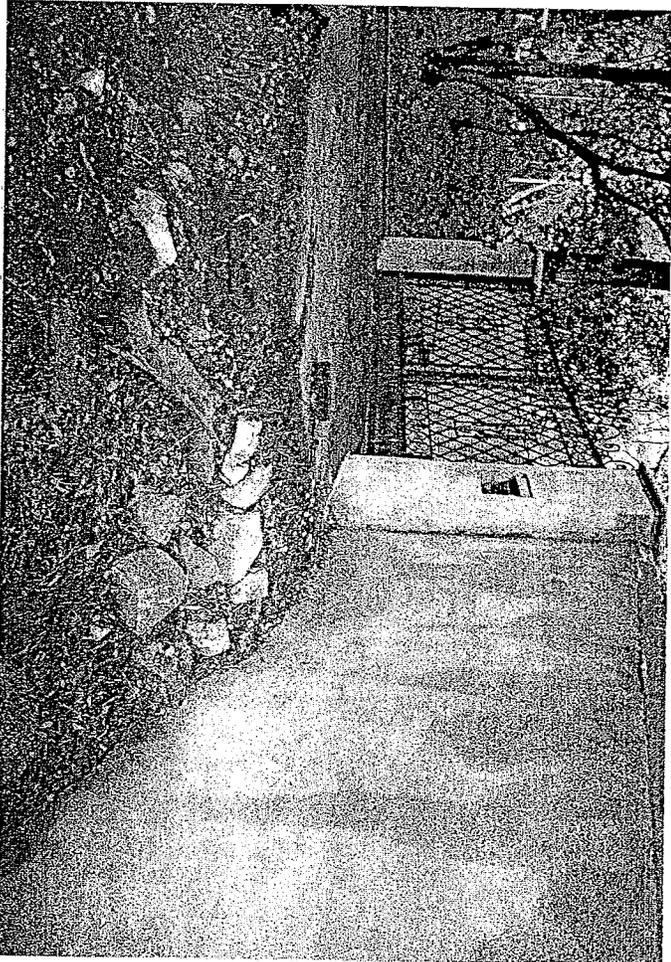
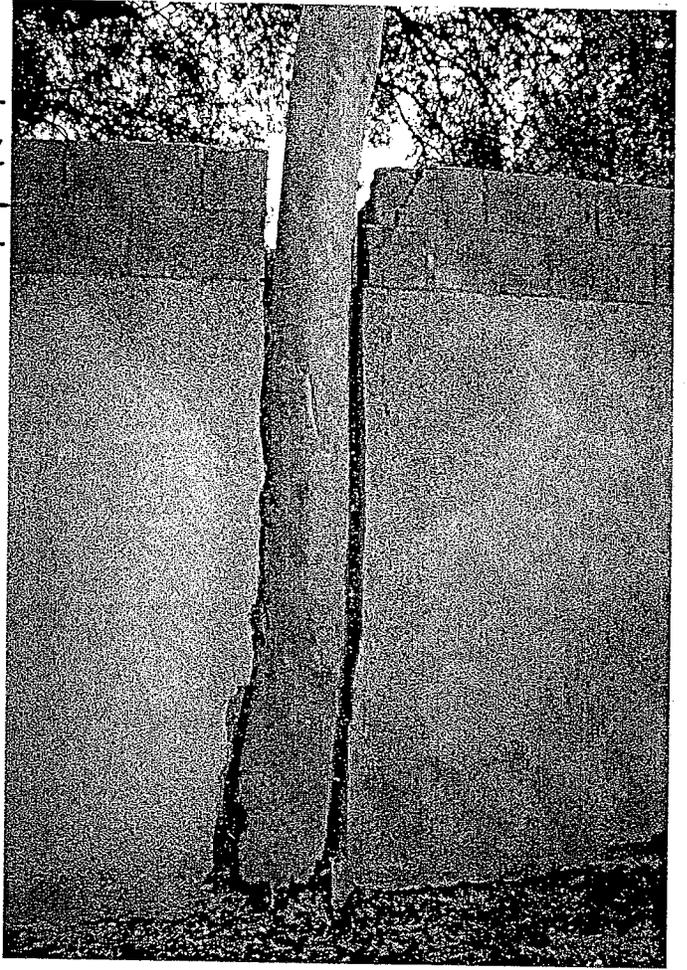


neighbor's gate





sandwiched tree



one entrance



no footer

Crack in stucco

