

R-27 CORRESPONDENCE – Dianne Sundstrom

From: <dianne.sundstrom@verizon.net>

Date: January 6, 2015 at 11:19:36 AM PST

To: <cityclerk@longbeach.gov>

Subject: comment re council agenda #27 - January 6, 2015

Mr. Herrera,

Would you please include this email as part of the documentation regarding item #27 on today's council agenda.

Thank you,
Dianne Sundstrom

Dear Mayor and Council Members,

I am writing as both a resident of Belmont Heights and a representative of the historic districts in Belmont Heights asking that the Council, before approving motion #27, review the fees associated with implementation of the Mills Act.

I could not find the proposed fee structure in the documents supporting this item on the council agenda. However, according to Maureen Neeley and Karen Highberger, both of whom are familiar with this issue, the Historic Landmark application fee is \$900. To apply for the Mills Act, the cost is \$1,100 per unit.

Staff is proposing to have the applications for landmark status and the Mills Act Contract submitted at the same time. The landmark application would be processed first and, if the building does not meet the criteria, I think the Mills Act application fee should be refunded. Some cities do not even charge an application fee (Pasadena and San Clemente) and the application fee in Los Angeles is only \$250.00 for a single family dwelling and, if approved, the contract execution fee is \$1.00 per every \$1,000.00 of assessed property valuation. In Pasadena, if the application is approved, the processing fee is \$1,099.01 for a single family dwelling. If you knew you would be awarded the Mills Act Contract, it would be much more palatable to pay the fee, instead of paying it up front and hoping for the best outcome. With this in mind, perhaps staff could develop some type of checklist or grid that could result in a "probability" index.

Further, for those who own a historically important multi-unit rental property, the fees could be prohibitive. For example, Brown's Court Apartments, a historic 6 unit building in Belmont Heights, would incur a cost of approximately \$7,500 to apply for the Mills Act, fully non-refundable if the property did not qualify.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter,

Regards,

Dianne Sundstrom, President, Belmont Heights Community Association
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Long Beach, CA 90814