

Joe Marrs  
Lafayette Condominiums  
140 Linden Avenue #801  
Long Beach, CA 90802

May 19, 2007

City of Long Beach  
Civic Center Plaza  
333 West Ocean Boulevard  
Long Beach, CA 90802

Attention: Public Safety Committee & City Council

Dear Members of the Public Safety Committee and the City Council,

As a resident of The Lafayette Condominiums, one of Long Beach's designated historic landmarks, I know that all of us are greatly concerned by the proposed changes to fire sprinkler requirements in the City of Long Beach. For many of us, especially those residents who are seniors or living on a fixed income, the financial burden of properly retrofitting a fire sprinkler system into our historic building would be unbearable and result in losing their home.

No one disputes the fact that fire sprinklers are the front line in fire suppression. However, what is important to recognize, is the unique situation of our historic structures and the very detailed guidance given by the State Architect of California regarding historic building compliance with safety codes throughout the state.

I strongly urge the members of the committee and council to read the guidelines of the State Architect's office regarding compliance with California's State Historical Building Code and State Historical Building Safety Board. Clearly, there needs to be an allowance for exemption or alternative compliance with whatever code changes are adopted. I propose the Public Safety Committee request staff, as a part of the final drafting of this ordinance, to provide an alternative compliance mechanism for those historic buildings that cannot be easily and economically retrofitted with fire sprinklers, and in our case, which have already evaluated the feasibility of fire sprinklers and spent large sums of money on fire safety systems that are state of the art in terms of smoke detection, audible and visual notification. Additionally there is a need to provide for individual evaluation and an appropriate reasonable level of compliance, for a building such as ours, which already has such fire safety systems in place and is built entirely of concrete, with metal interior studs and portland cement walls, all non-combustible materials.

I would propose that the committee and council direct staff to consider the following recommendation be incorporated in the final ordinance:

For such designated historic buildings that are categorized as 'high-rise', either establish standards to grant an exemption or provide for alternative means of compliance, such as:

-Maintaining a state of the art fire alert annunciated smoke detection system, with regular monitoring and inspections.

-Operational smoke detectors required in each unit, with regularly scheduled inspections required.

-Fire extinguisher required in each unit, with regularly scheduled inspections required.

-Regularly scheduled fire drills and fire safety training sessions for all residents.

-Consideration should be given to the composition of the predominant materials used in the building's construction, and an allowance for case-by case adjustments based on the relative risks and reasonable means of compliance as spelled out in the State Historic Building Code and State Historic Building Safety Board's guidelines.

Following are some key excerpts from the State Architect's web page giving guidance on Fire Protection and the State Historic Building Code:

[http://www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/StateHistoricalBuildingSafetyBoard/shbsb\\_codecompliance\\_rev\\_062503.htm](http://www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/StateHistoricalBuildingSafetyBoard/shbsb_codecompliance_rev_062503.htm)

**The SHBC is a mandate for the case-by-case evaluation and adoption of measures which will provide a reasonable degree of defense from risk, and assumes that, as a performance code, jurisdictions, engineers and owners will cooperate in effecting a solution at minimum loss of historic fabric or historic character.**

Given the value we place on historic resources, it seems paradoxical to find in Paragraph 8-801 that, "It is not the intent to protect the property..." This language sets priorities, making clear that **apart from insuring a reasonable level of life safety, there is a need to compromise where measures intended for property protection threaten or conflict with the preservation of significant historic and architectural features.** Moreover, built into the SHBC is the latitude to **pursue, evaluate and adopt any rational combination of materials and methodologies which will provide a reasonable level of life safety.** Detection technology has permitted us to recognize that they, together with smoke seals, may now be a building's most effective life-safety combination.

That fire sprinklers-installed in a manner that neither threatens nor defaces historic fabric, and that can be accomplished within the financial constraints of the owners-are a distinct and highly desirable bonus, cannot be denied. But **once a reasonable level of life safety for occupants and fire-fighting personnel has been established, anything beyond must be understood as a bonus, not a**

**mandate.** For this reason, there may arise circumstances where partial fire sprinkler systems-or even no fire sprinkler systems-may be appropriate, however otherwise desirable. And **while we may not neglect the life-safety of fire fighting personnel, the safe evacuation of building occupants can almost universally be achieved by means of early detection and warning systems, most of which can be installed with little or no threat to historic fabric.**

**Finally, it must be recognized that, with respect to qualified historic buildings, jurisdictions are enjoined [H&S 13143.2(e) & 13143.5(h)] from generating alternatives to, or more stringent fire, panic, and related standards than, those which exist in the California Building Standards Code, which, for historic buildings is Title 24, Part 8, the SHBC.**

These excerpts show that there is a clear mandate from the State of California for local jurisdictions to take the historic nature of buildings into consideration in evaluating compliance with more stringent local standards than those which exist in the California state codes.

I appreciate your consideration of our situation, and am confident that after reviewing the facts, you will agree that the city must provide a mechanism to, as the State Architect states “adopt any rational combination of materials and methodologies which will provide a reasonable level of life safety.” We at the Lafayette certainly feel we have done an outstanding job of achieving that rational combination of materials and methodologies. We are proud of the great working relationship we have maintained with our Fire Safety Inspectors at the Long Beach Fire Department over the years, and I personally am confident that I live in one of the safest buildings in Long Beach.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Joe Marrs

## Sharon Hays

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**From:** s harris [starcycle@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 21, 2007 4:31 PM  
**To:** lafayet@charterinternet.com  
**Subject:** my letter

Sharon - here is a copy of the letter that i sent....

Hello,

my name is Steve Harris and i live at 'the lafayette' @ 140 linden. i am writing you to ask for your help in amending the sprinkler ordinance - to provide an exception for historical buildings such as 'the lafayette'. as you know, 'the lafayette' is built out of concrete. we have fire extinguishers on every floor and an alarm system that is tested every 3 months. i was well aware that this building had no sprinklers when i bought my unit. retro-fitting would cause a hardship on almost everyone in this building. please help the people of your district. there are other ways to help put this building in compliance. help us explore those options.

thank you for your time. i will attend the meeting tomorrow to show support.

steve harris  
starcycle@hotmail.com  
140 linden #324  
long beach, ca 90802  
562-810-8259

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PC Magazine's 2007 editors' choice for best Web mail-award-winning Windows Live Hotmail.

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**tyco**

Fire &  
Security

**SimplexGrinnell**

SimplexGrinnell LP  
1701 W. Sequoia Avenue  
Orange, CA 92868

Kevin Adair  
Tel No. (714) 870-1010  
Extension 713  
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kadair@tycoint.com  
Calif. License No. 802591 Exp 12/31/2007

TO: Beach Front Property Management  
3711 Long Beach Blvd Ste #814  
Long Beach, CA 90807

RE: 1545 W. 19<sup>th</sup> St  
Long Beach, CA 90810

ATTN: Kenya Rizera

DATE: 4-9-07

Dear Kenya,

As per my job walk for the above referenced project, please find the following price and information:

1. Install a new fire sprinkler system through the referenced facility.
2. Price includes underground connection to be done by the city of Long Beach.
3. This proposal to be inclusive of all parts, materials, equipment, and labor to install the above mentioned work in a professional and timely manner.
4. All work as per NFPA 13 for the installation of automatic fire sprinkler systems and in compliance with Fire Department codes & regulations.
5. Plan design.
6. Plan check & permits fees.
7. On site Inspection walk through with the Fire Department as required.

Total.....\$93,870.00

**EXCLUSIONS:**

1. Work other than specified.
2. Fire extinguishers & cabinets.
3. Painting/Patching.
4. Alarm Service/Electrical.
5. Structural calculations.
6. Off hours work.
7. Smoke detectors.

**IMPORTANT NOTE TO CUSTOMER**

In accepting this Proposal, Customer agrees to the terms and conditions contained herein including those on the following pages of this Agreement and any other attachments or riders attached hereto that contain additional terms and conditions. It is understood that these terms and conditions shall prevail over any variation in terms and conditions on any purchase order or other document that the customer may issue. Any changes in the system requested by the Customer after the execution of this Agreement shall be paid for by the customer and such changes shall be authorized in writing. ATTENTION IS DIRECTED TO THE LIMITATION OF LIABILITY, WARRANTY, INDEMNITY AND OTHER CONDITIONS ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE.

Sincerely,



Kevin Adair  
Fire Sprinkler System Sales  
SimplexGrinnell LP

Accepted By:

X \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

May 21, 2007

Dear Public Safety & Long Beach City Council Members,

As members of the Lafayette Association of Homeowners, we are in agreement with other members of our Association – especially note the details in Joe Marrs' letter. The proposed changes to our historic building would be disastrous architecturally, and the cost of retrofitting devastating to the homeowners.

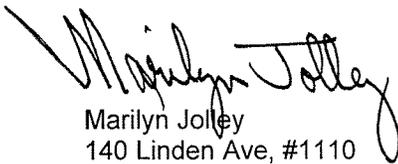
Please carefully reconsider and investigate other options before voting a flat mandate for fire sprinklers in all high rise buildings in Long Beach. Are there alternatives for qualified historic buildings that cannot be easily retrofitted with fire sprinklers -- buildings that have already spent large sums of money on state of the art fire safety systems??

The Lafayette is a complex of three historic buildings which, along with other historic buildings, should require special considerations. Please keep in mind the following:

1. Lafayette Buildings are made of concrete and steel, which are non-combustible materials – the interior walls have metal studs. This type of construction is much safer than the smaller wooden houses in the area.
2. Lafayette Buildings have fire alarm systems in place, plus fire extinguishers on all floors.
3. Modern fire sprinklers would destroy the significant architectural features of all historic Buildings in the area.
4. The astronomical cost of retrofitting -- cutting through thick concrete, etc. will require a special assessment which would put many people out of their homes.
5. Examples of required sprinklers for existing apartments and condominiums in larger Southern California cities show only one - Glendale.

Thank you for your consideration on this issue.

Best regards,



Marilyn Jolley  
140 Linden Ave, #1110  
Long Beach, CA 90802



Laraine Turner  
140 Linden Ave. #758  
Long Beach, CA 90802

May 21, 2007

*To Suja Lowenthal, the Members of the Public Safety Committee and the City Council:*

I am a resident of the Lafayette Condominiums, 140 Linden Avenue, and would like to provide input on the fire sprinkler ordinance you will be reviewing on May 22<sup>nd</sup>.

- Our building is a historic landmark constructed of non-combustible concrete.
- Our homeowners association has spent significant amounts of money on fire safety systems that are state of the art in terms of smoke detection, and audible and visual notification.
- The cost to retrofit a sprinkler system in our building would be extremely expensive given building issues such as 2 feet of solid concrete between every floor.
- The State Historic Building Code states that "Jurisdictions are enjoined from generating alternatives to, or more stringent fire, panic, and related standards than, those which exist in the California Building Standards Code, which, for historic buildings is Title 24, Part 8, the SHBC."
- The State Historic Building Code indicates that a "reasonable level" of fire safety measures should be taken in the case of historic buildings. To quote the code, "The safe evacuation of building occupants can almost universally be achieved by means of early detection and warning systems, most of which can be installed with little or no threat to historic fabric."

I respectfully request that the Public Safety Committee and the City Council modify the ordinance to either grant an exemption for historic high rise buildings or to provide for alternate means of compliance.

I personally would be willing to work with the committee and/or any other city personnel to develop alternate means of compliance. I would also be willing to form a fire safety committee with representatives from the other historic buildings in the area, so we could work with the City as a group. I know there are other residents of the Lafayette who would also be willing to work with you on this matter.

Joe Marrs, representing our homeowners association, has written you a detailed letter discussing the State Historic Building Code and various alternate means of fire safety compliance. I hope you will take the time to read his letter in full.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Paula Matusa  
The Lafayette, 140 Linden, #755  
562-435-9061

## Sharon Hays

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**From:** Leo Bell [leobell711@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, May 21, 2007 2:15 PM  
**To:** district5@longbeach.gov; district8@longbeach.gov; district9@longbeach.gov  
**Cc:** Sharon Hays; Mary Wright  
**Subject:** Fire sprinkler ordinance

To the Public Safety Committee:

Please add our voices in strong opposition to the Fire Sprinkler ordinance as it is presently written. As owners in an historical building, we have committed our resources to compliance with state and local ordinances to keep our building an award-winning window into Long Beach's past.

Now, however, we our being asked to individually commit a significant amount for an ordinance which frankly seems like a knee-jerk reaction to a tragedy that by all accounts was not caused by lack of a sprinkler system. We have complied with fire department regulations regarding alarms, fire exits and fire drills. We as residents believe existing laws are sufficient for our safety.

We believe at the very least that historical buildings should be granted exemptions from this ordinance. The state has established guidelines for such buildings that don't include a sprinkler system. Below is an excerpt from the State Architect on the subject and we ask that you reconsider the motion to include language relating to historic structures.

Thank you,

Leo Bell  
Mary Wright  
140 Linden Ave. #418  
The Lafayette  
Long Beach, CA 90802

When the property owners are insuring a reasonable level of life safety, there is a need to compromise where measures intended for property protection threaten or conflict with the preservation of significant historic and architectural features.

That fire sprinklers-installed in a manner that neither threatens nor defaces historic fabric, and that can be accomplished within the financial constraints of the owners-are a distinct and highly desirable bonus, cannot be denied. But once a reasonable level of life safety for occupants and fire-fighting personnel has been established, anything beyond must be understood as a bonus, not a mandate. For this reason, there may arise circumstances where partial fire sprinkler systems-or even no fire sprinkler systems-may be appropriate, however otherwise desirable. And while we may not neglect the life-safety of fire fighting personnel, the safe evacuation of building occupants can almost universally be achieved by means of early detection and warning systems, most of which can be installed with little or no threat to historic fabric.

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## Sharon Hays

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**From:** j.skaife@charter.net  
**Sent:** Monday, May 21, 2007 2:10 PM  
**To:** Broc\_coward@longbeach.gov; district2@longbeach.gov; district5@longbeach.gov; district8@longbeach.gov; district9@longbeach.gov  
**Cc:** Sharon Hays  
**Subject:** Sprinkler Requirements

**Importance:** High

For the attention of:  
Broc Coward, Suja Lowenthal, Gerrie Schipske, Rae Gabelich, Val Lerch. Long Beach City Council.

All,  
As an owner and resident of Long Beach condominium, (The Lafayette, Linden Ave. Long Beach) I wish to register my absolute and profound objection to the proposal for extensively complex fire protection systems retrofitted in such buildings as I reside. However tragic the Galaxy incident was, there may have been many factors contributing to that particular outcome. Not only would be financially disastrous to impose mandatory requirements for the installation of say sprinkler systems for example, in my building, it will undoubtedly drive many of us to sell, and seek more favorable locations in which to live. There are many challenges living in an upcoming downtown district, not least, in the case of Long Beach, the strangling parking restrictions, falling real estate values, and the lack of residential retail support (food markets). However many of us have remained optimistic and enjoy the colorful urban landscape on our doorsteps. Please do not jeopardize this, and send downtown tailspinning backwards, with fear based beaurocracy and unenforceable laws and mandates.

Yours Sincerely,  
Jennifer Skaife

140 Linden Ave, #656  
Long Beach. CA 90802  
Ph# 818 307 6437

May 22, 2007

City of Long Beach

Civic Center Plaza

333 West Ocean Boulevard

Long Beach, CA 90802

Attention: Public Safety Committee & City Council

Re: Fire Sprinkler Ordinance and Historic Landmark Buildings

Dear Members of the Public Safety Committee and the City Council,

As a concerned owner of a condominium in The Lafayette Condominiums, I became aware of the above referenced Fire Sprinkler Ordinance yesterday. I fully support the position of The Lafayette Association of Homeowners in this matter.

I am concerned that the financial burden imposed by modernizing and retrofitting historic buildings in general will expose such buildings to the wrecking ball, destroy historic fabric, displace the community of citizens who enjoy living in such ambience, and destroy the craftsmanship and beauty that will be demolished only to make way for speculators, architects, building contractors, insurance companies, lawyers and city permit departments to profit from such consequences.

Please carefully analyze the financial consequences of the Fire Sprinkler Ordinance and consider carefully how your actions impact the community at large. I urge you to weigh the safety considerations presented by industries that will financially profit from their implementation against and along with the ability of the community to afford the findings of organizations that stand to profit greatly from your decision.

This is not a slam/dunk issue. Please give the citizenry adequate time to get our defense in order. Please do not push this ordinance through today. Let all those affected have time to understand the impact and in turn voice their concerns for your consideration.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.  
Sincerely,

Heloise Torquato

140 Linden Avenue, Unit 342,

Long Beach, CA., 90802

562-634-2622