

Hearing Examiner McLean

I have submitted a hearing memorandum that describes most of the facts and my position as to the issues about why I think the City should issue the permit to restore the fire destroyed property under the same footprint. The memo submitted should provide you a feel for my predicament. However, it is my desire to also share the human side to being a victim of fire and the shock of not being able to rebuild. We are a small business owner and the adverse affects on us are greater then if we were some larger businesses in Redmond. We put our heart and soul into our small business.

Our property was purchased so business could be conducted in my hometown. We have lived in Redmond for almost 30 years. The property with the concrete and wood structure was in place when we purchased the property in 2004. All federal, state, and local laws were always adhered to. The commercial property was purchased in an industrial area specifically so we could be law compliant. It never crossed my mind that our purchase over a decade ago might not have been 100% conforming. We have continually run a lawful business from our property since day 1.

Circumstances changed on May 6, 2016 the morning of the fire. Redmond Fire Department phoned me at 7 am that fire had consumed the wooden portion of our building. Mutual of Enumclaw was contacted and safety mitigation was immediately done. They said not to worry because we were insured and that we could rebuild in as little as 90 days. It has now been over 9 months and we are still no closer to rebuilding.

It has been a challenge to work my way through Redmond's bureaucracy. I would like to share now that I do appreciate the City's role and the purpose and importance of planning and zoning. The purpose of permitting is to protect citizens from improper or dangerous development practices. The concrete structure was built in the early 1970s and the wooden structure in 1976. (I attached a picture to my memorandum.) When my property was developed I was only between 11 and 16 years old without much knowledge of anything. I am an innocent party and should not be punished.

All of my research demonstrates that the wooden addition's footprint would have been conforming in 1976. It is also understood that not only was the wooden structure used for decades before we purchased the property, but we have continually used it since our purchase in 2004. It is accepted that Redmond cannot find a permit for the addition. It is also understood that it's just as likely that permit was lost versus it never being obtained. The City simply defaults against the owner and issues the denial. Our system has an inherent flaw that shifts the burden of proof to the citizen. In my situation it is impossible to prove after 45 + years.

The purpose of appearing before you is ask for equity. Laws are written by and for people. The city employees must follow it to the letter and it is not up to them to interpret or judge. The sole purpose of my appeal is to appear before a person of reasonable judgment and the authority to grant me a permit to rebuild or any remedy or recommendation to overcome this hardship.

Larry Hooper