

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 02/18/2026 01:49 PM

Council File No: 25-1518

Comments for Public Posting: Please add document "2025-11-24_Eyesore or Crime Scene - Why We Must Save the Barry Building" to council file 25-1518.

Eyesore or Crime Scene? Why We Must Save the Barry Building

ZIGGY KRUSE BLUE AND BOB BLUE / NOVEMBER 24 2025



Comments

GUEST COMMENTARY -

The owners want to demolish Brentwood's Historic Cultural Monument #887. They say it's too expensive to fix. The truth is much simpler: They broke it on purpose.

The Barry Building, officially designated as Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) #887 by the City of Los Angeles, is not dying of natural causes. It is being executed. If we allow the City Council to approve its demolition, we aren't just losing a landmark; we are handing a blueprint to every developer in Los Angeles on how to destroy history for profit.

In this particular case, the owners want to tear down the Barry Building and leave an empty lot **with NO replacement project**. And so far, they have been given the "go ahead" from the City of Los Angeles (LADBS board file # BF 250851). This is a first for the City of Los Angeles!

The Strategy: Demolition by Neglect

If you drive past the Barry Building in Brentwood, you probably cringe. It is boarded up with weathered plywood, with flaking paint. It looks abandoned, dangerous, and out of place. You might find yourself thinking, "Just tear it down already." This is exactly what the owners want you to think.

In 2007, the City declared the Barry Building a historic monument. This meant it couldn't be torn down without a fight. So, the owners stopped fighting the designation and started fighting the building itself—a strategy known as Demolition by Neglect.

Around 2016, they evicted the tenants, fenced it off, and then deliberately failed to secure it properly. Windows were left open during record rainfall, inviting water damage to rot the interior. They allowed the facade to peel, creating a neighborhood nuisance on purpose. They knew that if a building looks ugly enough for long enough, the neighbors will eventually beg for the bulldozers.

The \$17 Million Lie: Exposing the Flawed Justification

Because the building is a Historic Monument (HCM #887), the law requires a full Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The EIR correctly admits that destroying this building is a "significant impact." To override this, the owners need a "Statement of

Overriding Considerations," which means they must prove that saving the building is financially impossible.

To support this claim, high-priced consultants (Hill International and CBRE) were hired, arguing it would cost \$17.1 million to perform a massive, gold-plated restoration, claiming the math "just doesn't work" against the building's estimated \$12 million value.

Here is the catch: The law doesn't require a complete palace restoration; it only requires the owners to make the building safe and compliant.

An independent cost estimate submitted by opponents shows that bringing the building into compliance with the required Soft Story Ordinance (Seismic Safety) would cost just \$379,000.

Owner's Inflated Claim	Actual Legal Requirement
\$17,100,000 (Total Restoration)	\$379,000 (Seismic Safety Compliance)

The owners are trying to charge the city for their own neglect. They should not be rewarded with a demolition permit because they refused to maintain their property.

The Secret Plan and Dangerous Precedent

Why go through all this trouble? The owners have gone on record stating they intend to sell the property immediately after demolition.

Critics argue the Environmental Impact Report was deeply flawed because it only looked at the Barry Building in isolation. The owners also own the surrounding parcels of land and are hiding their true build-out scenarios—combining all those lots into one massive mega-development—to avoid public scrutiny, even if a successor owner takes over the properties.

If the City grants this demolition, they are setting a dangerous precedent:

Do you have a historic building you want to destroy? Just kick out the tenants, break the windows, wait five years for the neighbors to complain, and we will let you tear it down.

The Solution and Call to Action

The City and Applicant are presenting a false choice between public benefits of some speculative future project or saving the Barry Building. The answer is you can have both.

We must hold the owners accountable and have the City enforce the law.

1. Reject the Demolition: The City must vote NO on the Statement of Overriding Considerations. There is no economic benefit that outweighs the loss of our history.
2. Enforce Compliance: The owners must spend the estimated \$379,000 to bring the building into seismic compliance immediately.
3. Preservation, Not Demolition: The preserved building can then be sold to successor owners. Rising like a Phoenix from the decay of owner neglect, the Barry Building can be repurposed for creative space on the upper floors and community shops on the ground level within a new development.

Furthermore, saving the Barry Building guarantees full transparency and disclosure through an Environmental Review (CEQA) process for any new project—an empty lot won't offer the local community this protection.

Contact Your Representative

The City shouldn't be fighting in court to save one HCM (like the Marilyn Monroe house) while fighting in court to destroy another existing HCM (the Barry Building).

Tell your representative it is unacceptable for the City to fight in court to protect landmarks like the Marilyn Monroe house while simultaneously ensuring the destruction of an already designated Historic-Cultural Monument, the Barry Building.

City Council Representatives:

District	Councilmember Name	Primary Public Email Address
CD 1	Eunisses Hernandez	councilmember.hernandez@lacity.org
CD 2	Adrin Nazarian	councilmember.nazarian@lacity.org
CD 3	Bob Blumenfield	councilmember.blumenfield@lacity.org
CD 4	Nithya Raman	contactCD4@lacity.org
CD 5	Katy Yaroslavsky	councilmember.yaroslavsky@lacity.org
CD 6	Imelda Padilla	councilmember.padilla@lacity.org
CD 7	Monica Rodriguez	councilmember.rodriguez@lacity.org
CD 8	Marqueece Harris-Dawson	councilmember.harris-dawson@lacity.org
CD 9	Curren Price, Jr.	councilmember.price@lacity.org
CD 10	Heather Hutt	cd10@lacity.org
CD 11	Traci Park	councilmember.park@lacity.org
CD 12	John Lee	councilmember.lee@lacity.org
CD 13	Hugo Soto-Martínez	councilmember.soto-martinez@lacity.org
CD 14	Ysabel Jurado	councilmember.jurado@lacity.org
CD 15	Tim McOsker	councilmember.mcosker@lacity.org

Please check in for updates and upcoming City Council Meeting(s) ... Stay tuned for more...

(Ziggy Kruse Blue is a freelance contributor to CityWatchLA and also a Former Board Member of the HSDNC.) Ziggy and Bob can be reached at ziggykruse@gmail.com.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 02/18/2026 01:50 PM

Council File No: 25-1518

Comments for Public Posting: Please add document "2025-12-01_The Tale of Two Monuments_Neglect, Demolition, and the Price of Preservation in Traci Park's District" to council file 25-1518.

The Tale of Two Monuments: Neglect, Demolition, and the Price of Preservation in Traci Park's District

ZIGGY KRUSE BLUE AND BOB BLUE / DECEMBER 01 2025



Barry Building, Marilyn Monroe House



Comments

CD11 - Los Angeles is no stranger to battles over its architectural heritage, but the preservation efforts surrounding two separate Historic-Cultural Monuments (HCMs) in Council District 11 are highlighting a crucial crisis in municipal enforcement. The focus has now centered on Marilyn Monroe's former home (HCM No. 1306) and the mid-century Barry Building (HCM No. 887), both falling under the purview of Councilmember Traci Park.

The two properties share a critical, troubling commonality: the owners of both HCMs have been accused of employing a strategy of "demolition by neglect."

Case One: The Fight for Marilyn's Legacy (HCM No. 1306)

The Brentwood home at 12305 Fifth Helena Drive, the only property Marilyn Monroe ever owned, recently became a lightning rod for preservationists. After current owners Brinah Milstein and Roy Bank purchased the house in July 2023 and swiftly obtained a demolition permit, a public outcry ensued. The Los Angeles City Council and a Superior Court judge intervened, successfully designating the property as Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) No. 1306, effectively blocking its demolition.

Councilmember Park was a vocal supporter of this designation, championing the safekeeping of the Spanish Hacienda-style house as a crucial piece of Hollywood and women's history. The victory was hailed as a triumph for preservationists.

However, the fight has evolved from outright demolition to a strategic legal challenge under the umbrella of "demolition by neglect." Critics allege the owners are intentionally allowing critical deterioration, citing issues like "numerous tiles missing from the roof for a few years" and the pool water turning a "dark shade of green." This strategic decay, critics argue, is designed to compromise the house's structural integrity, potentially forcing the city to invalidate the HCM designation and approve demolition.

Case Two: The Soft-Story Scandal at the Barry Building (HCM No. 887)

While the Monroe house faces calculated neglect, the Barry Building faces an existential threat rooted in cost and contested compliance. The owner and applicant for the demolition of HCM No. 887, 11973 San Vicente, LLC, is seeking to raze the structure rather than comply with the city's mandatory Soft-Story Retrofit Ordinance—a critical public safety measure. The proposed demolition of the Barry Building is a first for the City of Los Angeles. A demolition of a Historic-Cultural monument

without a replacement project. The owner will leave a dirt lot in its place.

The applicant is attempting to justify the demolition by submitting a claim of unforeseen financial hardship, arguing that the cost of seismic compliance is financially unfeasible. This was based solely from data provided by the owner.

In stark contrast to her vocal preservationist stance on the Monroe residence, Councilmember Park is reportedly supporting the applicant's request for demolition.

This controversial support—which effectively prioritizes a private claim of unfeasibility over mandatory public safety upgrades and historic status—has sparked allegations of a "backroom deal." Sources claim that, in exchange for supporting the demolition, Councilmember Park negotiated a compromise to "save" specific architectural features, such as staircases and benches, for potential reuse or display.

Preservationists vehemently oppose allowing demolition based on a claim of financial hardship, arguing that it establishes a dangerous precedent: historic status is conditional on the studies paid for by the owner showing inflated costs exceeding the appraised value of the building. The selective preservation of architectural elements is widely viewed by critics not as a compromise, but as a symbolic gesture that sacrifices the integrity of a fully designated HCM structure.

The Poignant Paradox

The juxtaposition of these two monuments is poignant. In both cases, the buildings face a slow death or swift destruction under the cloud of demolition by neglect—a clear signal that the HCM designation alone is not enough to guarantee a building's future.

In one instance, political and public will secured a cultural landmark, but must now contend with alleged malicious neglect. In the other, a significant piece of mid-century architecture faces the wrecking ball after a developer's financial argument was seemingly prioritized, and the Councilmember who championed preservation in

Brentwood is reportedly backing the developer's side.

These two ongoing disputes in the same district highlight the complex politics of historic preservation. The true crisis lies in the fact that two separate HCMs face destruction via the same mechanism of neglect, but receive radically different political responses. The outcome of these battles will not only determine the structural integrity of these two landmarks but will fundamentally re-evaluate the city's legal capacity and political will to enforce historic preservation against the combined pressures of private property interests and strategic neglect.

(Ziggy Kruse Blue is a freelance contributor to CityWatchLA and also a Former Board Member of the HSDNC.) Ziggy and Bob can be reached at ziggykruse@gmail.com.

Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 02/18/2026 01:52 PM

Council File No: 25-1518

Comments for Public Posting: Please add document "2026-01-08_Silence At The Sacred Village_ How LA City Agencies Disregarded Tribal Law at 11973 San Vicente Blvd" to council file 25-1518.

Silence At The Sacred Village: How LA City Agencies Disregarded Tribal Law at 11973 San Vicente Blvd

ZIGGY KRUSE BLUE & BOB BLUE / JANUARY 08 2026



Comments

LOS ANGELES — In the heart of Brentwood, beneath the pavement and the mid-century architecture of the Barry Building at 11973 San Vicente Boulevard, lies a history that predates the City of Los Angeles by thousands of years. It is the site of the sacred village of Kuruvungna, a landscape of immense cultural and spiritual significance to the Gabrieleno people.

Under California's Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), state and local agencies are legally mandated to consult with Native American tribes to protect such resources. However, public records uncovered from the Department of City Planning (DCP) reveal a narrative of administrative negligence, a breach of legal confidentiality, and a disregard for the sacredness of the land that has now collided with a landmark 2025 appellate court ruling.

The "Confidential" File That Wasn't

In August 2024, an in-office records review at the DCP revealed documents that should never have been in a public-facing file.

In November 2020, the Gabrieleno Administration explicitly warned the City:

"The information provided herein is to be kept confidential... [it] shall be available for use to those associated to the project but no entity outside of the project."

Despite this clear invocation of Government Code Section 6254.10 (which was recodified in 2023 to 7927.005) - which protects the location of Native American graves and sacred sites from public disclosure—sensitive tribal archive information, historic maps, and explanatory texts were left accessible. This breach not only violates the trust of the Gabrieleno people but also contradicts the very protections AB 52 was written to provide.

The Koi Nation Precedent: A New Standard for "Meaningful" Consultation

The City's "check-the-box" approach to these archives is no longer just a moral failure; as of March 2025, it is a legal liability. In the landmark case *Koi Nation of Northern California v. City of Clearlake* (A169438), the Court of Appeal ruled that "meaningful" consultation requires an agency to engage in a genuine, two-way dialogue aimed at reaching a mutual agreement.

The Koi court found Clearlake's process "perfunctory at best" because the city failed to formally respond to a tribe's proposed mitigation measures or provide a rationale for rejecting them. The records for the Barry Building tell a similar story. In a July 21, 2022, email, City Planning admitted it "recognize[s] the Tribe's concerns," yet unilaterally moved to close consultation, claiming "no evidence was found identifying any tribal cultural resources on the Project Site".

Substantial Evidence vs. The "Artificial Fill" Fallacy

The communications between the Tribe and City Planner Bradley Furuya show a Tribe pleading for the recognition of a "Cultural Landscape." The Tribe provided "substantial evidence" that the project site is located within a sacred village adjacent to traditional trade routes and water courses. The Gabrieleno Administration was clear:

"There is a high potential to impact Tribal Cultural Resources still present within the soil... [the project] may have a significant impact on our TCRs."

Emails from November 2020 show the City attempting to minimize this impact by claiming the first two feet of soil was "artificial fill." The Tribe countered by asking a vital question: Was that fill imported, or was it original material? Under the Koi Nation ruling, a lead agency is now explicitly forbidden from dismissing tribal expertise in favor of narrow archaeological records. The court confirmed that Tribal Cultural Values must be weighed as heavily as physical "scientific" evidence when evaluating

a site's significance.

A Pattern of Neglect

The Barry Building project is a test of the City's commitment to indigenous rights. When a lead agency treats AB 52 as a bureaucratic hurdle, it risks erasing the last remaining vestiges of the Gabrieleno heritage. As noted in a 2018 letter from archaeologist Gary Stickel to Tribal Chairman Andrew Salas:

"The only exception [to a monitoring program] would be if a given property has had all of its soil deposits removed and/or destroyed beyond any reasonable doubt of containing cultural resources."

By proceeding without rigorous, tribal-led monitoring and by failing to protect the confidentiality of the Tribe's ancestral knowledge, the DCP has turned a blind eye to both the letter and the spirit of the law.

A Call for Independent Accountability

The handling of 11973 San Vicente Blvd is no longer just a planning issue; it is a matter of legal accountability. By failing to sequester confidential tribal data, the DCP may have violated Government Code Section 7927.005. By failing to properly conclude the AB 52 consultation despite the new standards set in the Koi Nation case, they have sidestepped the California Environmental Quality Act.

While the LA City Attorney typically acts to shield city departments, the gravity of these procedural failures requires a more independent look. The Los Angeles District Attorney's Public Integrity Division and the California Office of the Attorney General should examine whether the DCP willfully disregarded state mandates designed to protect Native American heritage.

The City cannot claim to be a partner to indigenous communities while leaving their

sacred archives in the public square and their sacred sites at the mercy of a backhoe. It is time for an independent audit of the Barry Building file before the history of Kuruvungna is lost forever.

*(**Ziggy Kruse Blue** is a freelance contributor to CityWatchLA) Ziggy and Bob can be reached at ziggykruse@gmail.com)*

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Communication from Public

Name:

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Comments for Public Posting: Please add document "2026-02-16_DIGGING INTO DECEPTION _ The “Five-Foot Falsehood” and the Failure of AB 52 at the Barry Building" to council file 25-1518.

DIGGING INTO DECEPTION : The “Five-Foot Falsehood” and the Failure of AB 52 at the Barry Building

ZIGGY KRUSE BLUE / FEBRUARY 16 2026



Comments

PERSPECTIVE - While the public battle for the Barry Building has largely centered on

its iconic facade, a more profound deception is being unearthed in the project's environmental review. By ignoring the depth of native soil, the City of Los Angeles has bypassed critical state protections and effectively shut out the voices of the land's original stewards.

The Hidden Conflict

While the battle over the historic Barry Building (HCM #887) often focuses on its mid-century architecture, a deeper, more ancient conflict is buried beneath the surface—literally. New evidence submitted to the LA City PLUM Committee reveals that the City of Los Angeles has potentially violated Assembly Bill 52 (AB 52), a state law designed to protect Tribal Cultural Resources (TCR), by ignoring its own geotechnical data and silencing indigenous voices.

The Physical Impossibility

The City's Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) justifies a "No Impact" finding on tribal resources by claiming that excavation will only occur in previously disturbed artificial fill. However, the project's own specifications reveal a smoking gun that exposes a staggering lack of transparency:

- **The Admission:** In 2020, the City admitted in writing that artificial fill at the San Vicente site only extends to a depth of two feet.
- **The Reality:** The developer's project plans require excavation down to five feet for foundation demolition and utility removal.
- **The Violation:** That three-foot gap represents undisturbed Alluvial fan deposits (native soils). This is the exact high-sensitivity zone where the Gabrieleno Band of Mission Indians Kizh Nation warned that Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs) are likely to be found.

By claiming "No Impact" while planning to dig three feet into native earth, the City isn't just making a clerical error—they are ignoring the physical reality of the land to fast-track a demolition.

A Hollow Consultation and the Paper Trail of Silence

Under AB 52, the City is legally obligated to engage in meaningful consultation with affiliated tribes. "Meaningful" is the keyword, yet records obtained through the California Public Records Act show a pattern of non-response that renders the word hollow.

On August 30, 2022, the Kizh Nation demanded that the City provide "substantial findings" to back up their dismissal of tribal evidence. They asked for proof. Specifically, they requested documentation confirming whether the original native soils were ever truly removed and replaced with imported fill, or if the original earth was simply excavated and backfilled into the same location.

What did they get? Silence.

A recent inquiry confirmed a disturbing fact: Since that August 2022 request, there has been zero further communication between City Staff and the Tribe. Instead of answering the Tribe's concerns, internal emails regarding the consultation were shielded under "attorney-client privilege". By failing to provide the requested data, the City has effectively blindfolded the Tribe, preventing them from protecting their ancestral heritage.

Why It Matters: A Procedural Failure

By failing to produce a valid record and moving forward on a record that is demonstrably deficient, the City has created a procedural vacuum. As the PLUM Committee prepares for its February 24th hearing (Council File 25-1518), they are not just voting on a building's fate.

They are voting on a precedent: Can an environmental review be considered legally adequate when it ignores the physical reality of the ground it intends to break?

If the City of Los Angeles is willing to bypass state law and silence indigenous history to satisfy a developer's timeline, one has to wonder: what else is being buried beneath the surface?

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD: How to Take Action

The future of our city's heritage and the integrity of our environmental laws depend on public oversight. Reach out to the members of the Los Angeles City Council today and demand that they grant the appeal for Council File 25-1518.

The clock is ticking for the Barry Building. To ensure your objection is part of the official administrative record, you must submit your comments no later than February 20, 2026. When submitting, clearly reference the Barry Building Demolition Project: Council File No. 25-1518.

1. Submit Your Comments Online:

The most effective way to ensure your voice is heard by the entire Council is to upload your comments directly to the public portal. Official Public Comment Portal: <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/publiccomment/?cfnumber=25-1518>

To view the Full Council File, please follow the link below:

<https://cityclerk.lacity.org/lacityclerkconnect/index.cfm?fa=ccfi.viewrecord&cfnumber=25-1518>

2. Contact the PLUM Committee Directly:

In addition to the public portal, send your comments to the Legislative Assistant for the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee to ensure they are distributed to the committee members:

Attn: Candy Rosales, Legislative Assistant, Candy.Rosales@lacity.org

3. Reach Out to the Full City Council:

Use the table below to email each Councilmember directly and demand that they uphold state law and protect our history.

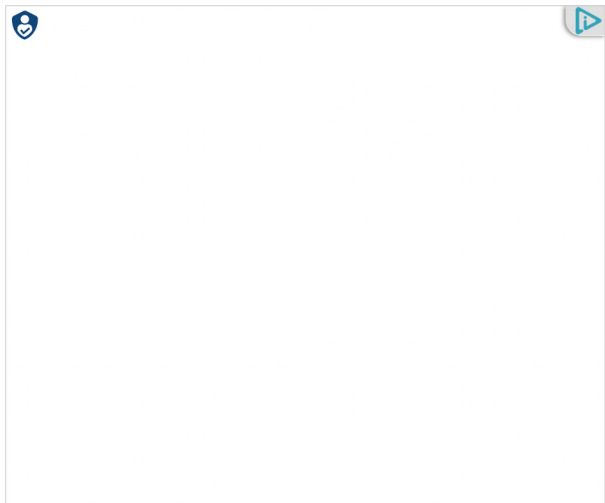
CD #	Councilmember	Primary Public Email Address
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CD 1	Eunisses Hernandez	councilmember.hernandez@lacity.org
CD 2	Adrin Nazarian*	councilmember.nazarian@lacity.org
CD 3	Bob Blumenfield*	councilmember.blumenfield@lacity.org
CD 4	Nithya Raman*	contactCD4@lacity.org
CD 5	Katy Yaroslavsky	councilmember.yaroslavsky@lacity.org
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CD 7	Monica Rodriguez	councilmember.rodriguez@lacity.org
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CD 14	Ysabel Jurado	councilmember.jurado@lacity.org
CD 15	Tim McOsker	councilmember.mcosker@lacity.org

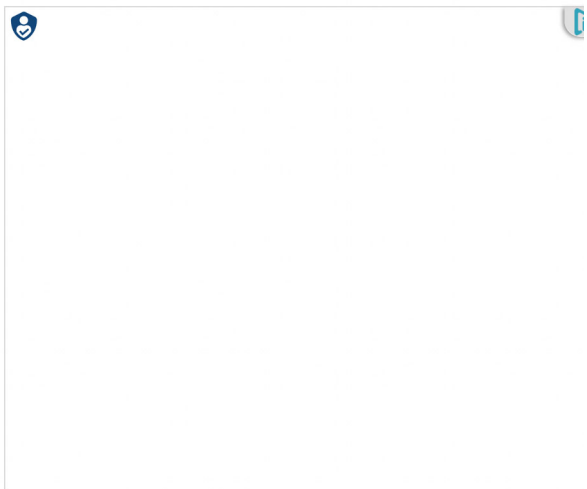
*Indicates: Councilmember is also a member of the PLUM Committee.

(Ziggy Kruse Blue is a freelance contributor to CityWatchLA. Ziggy can be reached at ziggykruse@gmail.com)

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Communication from Public

Name:

Date Submitted: 02/18/2026 01:56 PM

Council File No: 25-1518

Comments for Public Posting: Please add document "2026-02-12_What the Proponents for the Demolition of the Barry Building Didn't Tell You—And Why You Should Care" to council file 25-1518.

What the Proponents for the Demolition of the Barry Building Didn't Tell You—And Why You Should Care

BOB BLUE / FEBRUARY 12 2026



Comments

VIEWPOINT - The debate over the 1951 Barry Building in the Brentwood

neighborhood of Los Angeles is often framed as a simple choice between an old building and modern progress. But that is a carefully curated narrative. Behind the scenes, the push to raze this Historic-Cultural Monument (HCM) hides a series of maneuvers that threaten the rights of every resident in Los Angeles.

The decision by the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners (BBSC) to certify an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations (SOC) and other actions to allow the demolition of the Barry Building is being appealed.

This appeal will be heard at the February 24, 2026 meeting of the PLUM Committee at 2 PM in Room 340 (John Ferraro Council Chamber) of City Hall, located at 200 N. Spring St., Los Angeles, CA 90012.

Silencing Your Voice Through By-Right Development that bypasses Environmental Review

Local residents should be deeply alarmed. Without the protection of a historic designation, this site becomes a blank slate for By-Right development. Under the state legislation passed on June 30, 2025, the developer's By-Right options have expanded, allowing them to bypass the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) entirely.

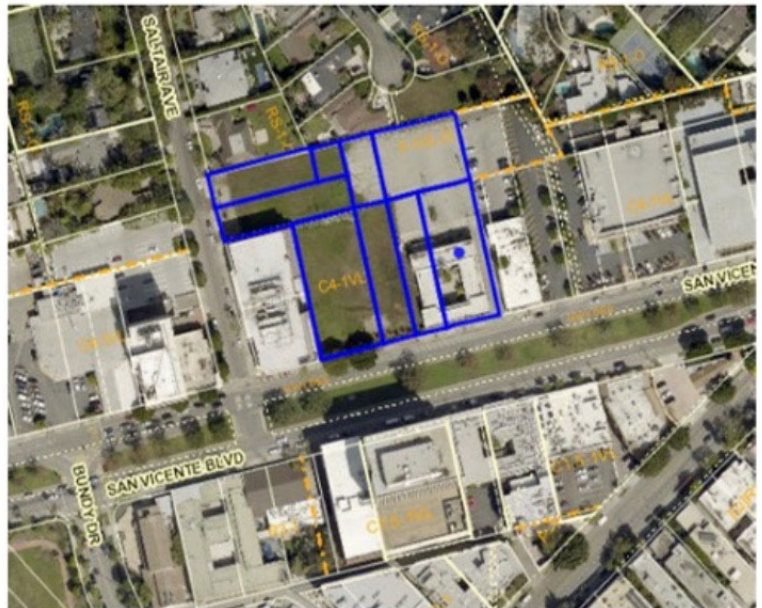
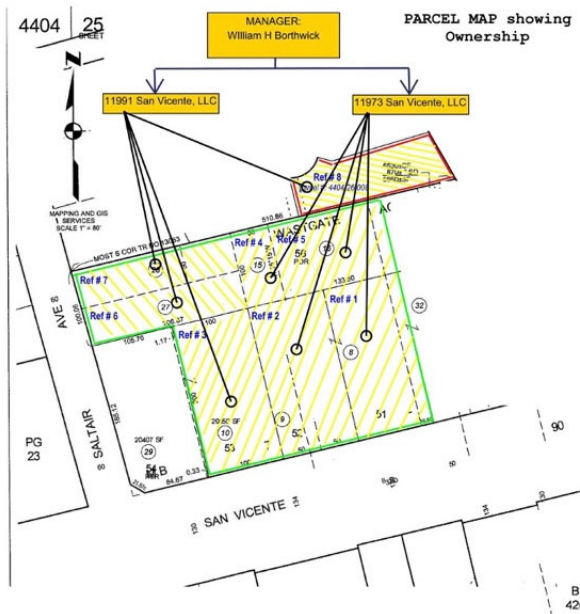
Anyone who has sat in a car or rode on a bus during the weekday afternoon surge knows the reality: eastbound San Vicente Blvd, from 26th Street to the I-405 and Westwood, is a total gridlock.

Yet, without CEQA, you lose your right to public hearings and your right to see independent studies on how a massive new project will impact existing congestion, parking, and sunlight. They aren't just tearing down a building; they are tearing up your right to have a say in your own neighborhood.

The Strategy of Demolition by Neglect

Proponents argue the building is now a nuisance or an eyesore. What they won't tell you is that this was a calculated choice. In response to warnings about a Soft Story

Ordinance compliance issue, in 2016, the owners evicted all tenants and have since left the building to rot. Photos from 2016 show the building was in much better shape until it was shuttered and denied basic maintenance. If the City allows this demolition, they are rewarding a property owner for strategically creating neighborhood blight to circumvent preservation laws.



Empty Lots and Broken Promises: The Green Hollow Square Legacy

The owners refuse to answer one simple question: why has the land surrounding the Barry Building been sitting vacant for over a decade? After withdrawing their entitlement request for the "Green Hollow Square" project, the owners systematically demolished every surrounding structure, including single-family homes and an Art Gallery, leaving behind a scarred landscape of empty lots. This financial loss was self-imposed prior to the soft story ordinance notice.

According to parcel maps, these properties—including the Barry Building site—are managed by two entities: 11991 San Vicente, LLC and 11973 San Vicente, LLC, both managed by one person, William H. Borthwick. By clearing everything except the Barry Building, the owners have created a manufactured blight, holding the neighborhood hostage until they can secure the demolition of the final piece.

The Traci Park Paradox: Marilyn Monroe vs. The Barry Building

There is a glaring inconsistency in how Council District 11 is being governed. When the owners of Marilyn Monroe's former home fought against historic designation to allow for a demolition permit to clear the way for new construction, Councilmember Traci Park took an aggressive stand to save it, even against the owners' wishes. Why is the Councilmember fighting tooth and nail to save one Brentwood landmark while clearing the path for the Barry Building to be reduced to a dirt lot? The law shouldn't be a pick-and-choose menu; it should be applied consistently to protect our community's heritage.

A Slaughter List for L.A. Landmarks - A City-Wide Precedent

In the November 18, 2025, Board of Building and Safety Commissioners hearing, the applicant's representative pointed to the next demolition targets by finding four other Historic-Cultural Monuments that fall under the same soft-story ordinance affecting the Barry Building.

The Barry Building Demolition Project is a test case. If seismic costs—often inflated by years of intentional neglect—become a get out of jail free card for demolition, no monument in any Council District is safe from a demolition without a replacement project. The Barry Building is the first domino; your favorite local landmark could be next.

Profiting from the Power of Public Officeholders

William H Borthwick is the sole manager for the two Limited Liability companies that own the Barry Building and surrounding parcels. He is the stepson of the late investor, Charles T. Munger, who was associated with the Barry Building through his marriage to the late Nancy Barry Munger.

This is not a small, struggling landlord; this is sophisticated land-holding. The Barry Building property will never be sold alone; it is the missing piece in a larger package all managed by Mr. Borthwick.

Why are our elected officials using their power to grant a Statement of Overriding Considerations for a project that doesn't exist? Granting a demolition permit for a

vacant dirt lot does nothing for the public—it only inflates the private sale price for the owner.

Replacing False Choices with a Win-Win Solution

True economic feasibility must be measured against the total potential of the site—not just one isolated lot. We know the owner intends to sell the site along with adjacent properties; this larger footprint makes the adaptive reuse of the Barry Building both practical and profitable. We shouldn't allow a landmark to be erased just to tidy up a property owner's balance sheet. Los Angeles deserves a future where new development and historic monuments thrive together, not at each other's expense.

Let your Voice Be Heard

You can submit comments for the record. Please submit your comments as soon possible and before February 20, 2026. Be sure to always include the name of the project and Council File Number: Barry Building Demolition Project, Council File No. 25-1518:

1. Uploading and Posting Your Comments to the Council File 25-1518 for this item: which can be found at <https://cityclerk.lacity.org/publiccomment/?cfnumber=25-1518>

2. Emailing members of the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM):

You can email the PLUM Committee care of the Legislative Assistant Candy Rosales, email: Candy.Rosales@lacity.org

Subject: Barry Building Demolition Project, Council File No. 25-1518

3. Contacting your Councilmember or all Councilmembers: <https://lacity.gov/directory#elected-officials>

(Bob Blue is a Los Angeles resident and an occasional CityWatch contributor. He can be reached at bob.blue@live.com)

Related Articles:

Eyesore or Crime Scene? Why We Must Save the Barry Building:

<https://www.citywatchla.com/neighborhood-politics/31861-eyesore-or-crime-scene-why-we-must-save-the-barry-building>

The Tale of Two Monuments: Neglect, Demolition, and the Price of Preservation in Traci Park's District:

<https://www.citywatchla.com/neighborhood-politics/31887-the-tale-of-two-monuments-neglect-demolition-and-the-price-of-preservation-in-traci-parks-district>

Silence At The Sacred Village: How LA City Agencies Disregarded Tribal Law at 11973 San Vicente Blvd:

<https://www.citywatchla.com/los-angeles/32075-silence-at-the-sacred-village-how-la-city-agencies-disregarded-tribal-law-at-11973-san-vicente-blvd>

Communication from Public

Name: Laura Houston

Date Submitted: 02/18/2026 02:27 PM

Council File No: 25-1518

Comments for Public Posting: Please stop tearing down the historic buildings in Los Angeles!!!!
You are ruining the city! This beloved building should be saved
and not torn down. Do the right thing for the people and city.

Communication from Public

Name: John Kuckowicz

Date Submitted: 02/18/2026 08:05 PM

Council File No: 25-1518

Comments for Public Posting: Please do not let this wonderful building become another example of destroying something that could certainly be restored, upgraded and used for something far better than just another empty lot, strip mall of no importance or another mostly unaffordable small housing development for white collar upper middle-class workers. It saddens me to visit the Los Angeles region (where my family once lived) and seeing it become more homogenized and less unique that it once was. It has a long history of being useful for a great many people - as a bookstore - and can certainly fill a similar role the surround neighborhood. Thank you for your for time and consideration in this matter.

Communication from Public

Name: Maria D'Orsogna

Date Submitted: 02/18/2026 06:36 PM

Council File No: 25-1518

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Ms. Traci Park, I am writing to express strong opposition to the proposed demolition of the Barry Building, a designated Historic-Cultural Monument in Los Angeles. This 1951 Modernist building, designed by architect Milton Caughey and historically home to Dutton's Bookstore, is a unique and irreplaceable part of San Vicente Boulevard's postwar architectural heritage. The proposed demolition is particularly troubling because it is not part of a broader development project; the owners seek to remove this landmark simply to create a vacant lot. This is crazy and sets a dangerous precedent: rewarding an owner who has allowed the building to deteriorate over many years and circumventing the normal protections and review processes intended to safeguard historic resources. The Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission unanimously recommended against demolition, citing the feasibility of preservation or adaptive reuse. Despite this, the Department of Building and Safety certified the Final Environmental Impact Report and adopted the SOC, enabling demolition. This decision ignores expert guidance and undermines the City's commitment to protecting its historic landmarks. Allowing demolition of the Barry Building is unnecessary and harmful. Out of over 1,300 Historic-Cultural Monuments in Los Angeles, only a handful have been lost to new development, and each case was carefully considered. The Barry Building's architectural and cultural significance—its International Style features, central courtyard, and role as a community landmark—deserves preservation, not erasure. I urge you to support efforts to preserve the Barry Building, respect the Cultural Heritage Commission's recommendation, and oppose this demolition. Preserving the Barry Building is not only a matter of honoring our city's history but also of setting a responsible precedent for future landmark protection. Thank you, please save our history for future generations. Sincerely, Maria R D'Orsogna, PhD.

Communication from Public

Name: Maria D'Orsogna

Date Submitted: 02/18/2026 07:10 PM

Council File No: 25-1518

Comments for Public Posting: Dear Ms. Traci Park, I am writing to express strong opposition to the proposed demolition of the Barry Building, a designated Historic-Cultural Monument in Los Angeles. This 1951 Modernist building, designed by architect Milton Caughey and historically home to Dutton's Bookstore, is a unique and irreplaceable part of San Vicente Boulevard's postwar architectural heritage. The proposed demolition is particularly troubling because it is not part of a broader development project; the owners seek to remove this landmark simply to create a vacant lot. This is crazy and sets a dangerous precedent: rewarding an owner who has allowed the building to deteriorate over many years and circumventing the normal protections and review processes intended to safeguard historic resources. The Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Commission unanimously recommended against demolition, citing the feasibility of preservation or adaptive reuse. Despite this, the Department of Building and Safety certified the Final Environmental Impact Report and adopted the SOC, enabling demolition. This decision ignores expert guidance and undermines the City's commitment to protecting its historic landmarks. Allowing demolition of the Barry Building is unnecessary and harmful. Out of over 1,300 Historic-Cultural Monuments in Los Angeles, only a handful have been lost to new development, and each case was carefully considered. The Barry Building's architectural and cultural significance—its International Style features, central courtyard, and role as a community landmark—deserves preservation, not erasure. I urge you to support efforts to preserve the Barry Building, respect the Cultural Heritage Commission's recommendation, and oppose this demolition. Preserving the Barry Building is not only a matter of honoring our city's history but also of setting a responsible precedent for future landmark protection. Thank you, please save our history for future generations. Sincerely, Maria R D'Orsogna, PhD.

Communication from Public

Name: Karin D Espinosa

Date Submitted: 02/15/2026 02:00 PM

Council File No: 25-1518

Comments for Public Posting: I strongly oppose demolishing the HISTORIC Barry building that once housed Dutton's books and that I spent so much of my time while growing up. If demolished what will be put in tis place will only add to further traffic congestion. Since the LA Fires, we need to mindful of evacuation routes and density that will make this evacuation potentially deadly. It is not a matter of "if" but "when".