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April 20, 2026

VIA Online Portal Only

Los Angeles City Council
c/o Office of the City Clerk
Los Angeles City Hall
200 North Spring Street, Room 395
Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Re: SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION IN SUPPORT OF THE APPEAL:
DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT AND MAINTENANCE FAILURE
11973-11975 West San Vicente Blvd. (Demolition of the
Barry Building, HCM #887), Council File No. 25-1518,
ENV-2019-6645-EIR; April 21, 2026 City Council Meeting,
Agenda Item 29**

Honorable Councilmembers,

We are writing to formally object to the Planning and Land Use Management (PLUM) Committee's recommendation to deny the appeal filed by Angelenos for Historic Preservation (AHP). This letter is submitted strictly under protest to preserve all administrative and legal remedies.

The City Council must approve the appeal and decline to certify the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Statement of Overriding Considerations (SOC) for the following reasons:

Introduction

This supplemental information is submitted in support of the appeal regarding the Barry Building (HCM #887). The evidence provided herein demonstrates that the economic infeasibility cited by the applicant is the direct result of Demolition by Neglect. Central to this issue is the lack of cyclical maintenance, which became particularly acute following the closure of the building and the eviction of its tenants in 2016.

The legal obligation to maintain this property operates on two distinct levels.

Under LAMC Section 91.8104, every property owner in the City of Los Angeles is legally mandated to maintain their property in a safe, clean, and secure condition.

Furthermore, as a designated Historic-Cultural Monument, the Barry Building is subject to the Los Angeles Cultural Heritage Ordinance (LAAC Section 22.171), which entrusts the owner with the stewardship of a City-recognized resource. Allowing a monument to deteriorate to justify its eventual removal is a violation of both the letter and the spirit of the City's preservation and building safety laws.

1. Recognition of Monument Status and Lack of Opposition to Designation

The historic significance of this resource was established with the explicit non-opposition of the property ownership. On October 2, 2007, the Los Angeles City Council voted unanimously (14-0) to grant Historic-Cultural Monument status to the Barry Building. This action established a clear baseline for the building's preservation and the owner's awareness of their responsibilities to the City's cultural heritage.

2. Baseline Condition and Documentation of the Resource in 2016

The condition of the Barry Building at the time of its closure was documented in 2016 by Laura Clayton Baker, an interior designer who worked in the building for nearly 23 years. Her documentation, featuring exterior and interior photos dated September 29, 2016, provides a professional firsthand account of the resource's state just prior to its vacancy. These records serve as a baseline for the building's physical integrity before it was closed to the public. **(Attachment A)**

3. Breach of the Building Envelope and Documented Deterioration (2025-2026)

Photographic evidence from 2025 and 2026 reveals a significant and preventable breach of the building envelope. Most notably, numerous windows have been left open and unsecured for an extended period. This exposure is particularly damaging due to Wind-Driven Rain (WDR). Technical documentation emphasizes that WDR is a primary source of moisture-related deterioration in buildings, as wind pressure forces liquid water into the interior structure. By leaving windows open, the owner has effectively bypassed the building's primary defense,

accelerating internal decay. Furthermore, photos clearly document flaking and peeling paint on both wood and metal surfaces, leaving underlying materials vulnerable. **(Attachment B)**

4. Mold as Evidence of Prolonged Moisture Intrusion and Maintenance Failure

The applicant is currently citing economic infeasibility as a primary justification for demolition, arguing that the cost of remediation is prohibitive. However, a substantial portion of the cost estimate provided by the applicant's consultant, Hill International, involves non-seismic repairs—specifically, the remediation of black mold and hazardous material abatement.

Mold is a direct result of moisture intrusion, a condition that does not occur in a properly maintained building. The applicant's experts have documented a significant amount (in linear feet) of mold growth on interior walls. This is a direct result of the owner's failure to maintain a weather-tight building envelope since 2016. Under established preservation principles, an owner may not claim economic hardship based on conditions created by their own willful neglect.

5. Major Rain and Atmospheric River (AR) Events: 2016–2026

Since the building was vacated in 2016, Los Angeles has experienced a series of historic precipitation events that exploited the Barry Building's breached envelope.

Date Range	Storm Type / Event	Significant Impact / Environmental Data
Feb 15–17, 2026	Powerful Atmospheric River	Heavy rain and strong winds; flash flood alerts throughout West LA.
Nov 2025	Wettest November in 58 Years	Recorded 15.83" of rain to date by end of Jan 2026.

Date Range	Storm Type / Event	Significant Impact / Environmental Data
Feb 4-6, 2024	Historic AR-3 Event	One of the wettest multi-day stretches on record (5-10" in LA Basin).
Jan 31-Feb 9, 2024	Series of Atmospheric Rivers	Sustained high humidity levels.
Winter 2022-2023	Multiple AR Sequences	Repeated pressure differentials at height.
Mar-Apr 2020	Late Season Rain	High-velocity wind events.
2018-2019 Season	Above-Average Rainfall	Cumulative moisture loading.
Winter 2016-2017	Major Rain Year (19.00" Total)	Documented rainfalls.

Sources: *National Weather Service (NWS) UCLA/Westwood Station; Los Angeles Almanac; Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes (CW3E).*

6. Case Study in Proper Stewardship: Adjacent Caughey-Designed Resource

A direct comparison can be made to the adjacent property at 11961-11969 San Vicente Blvd (Photos attached as Attachment B).

- **Original Owner/Builder:** Robert S. Barry
- **Architect:** Milton Caughey (Architect of the Barry Building)
- **Year Built:** 1950 (One year prior to the Barry Building)

Despite being older than the Barry Building and sharing the same architect and environmental exposure, this property remains a vibrant, fully leased, and well-maintained asset. The contrast between these properties is stark. While the 1950 property has been preserved through standard cyclical maintenance, the Barry Building has been subjected to a pattern of deferred maintenance that extends back beyond its 2016 closure. The physical evidence suggests that the current state of decay is the result of a prolonged failure to perform necessary repairs.

In closing, the resulting mold and rot at the Barry Building are not unforeseen costs of an aging building; they are the predictable consequences of leaving a Historic-Cultural Monument open to the elements and failing to perform cyclical maintenance over several years. The thriving condition of the adjacent 1950 Caughey building proves that preservation is not only feasible but is the natural result of responsible stewardship. The City Council should grant the appeal by Angelenos for Historic Preservation and reverse the actions taken by the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners in their November 18, 2025 meeting.

Sincerely,

Robert Blue

Robert Blue

Sieglinde Kruse Blue

Sieglinde Kruse Blue

Attachment A

Full-Size Photos from **“Last Days of the Barry Building?”**

PAINTING BOX Post by LAURA CLAYTON BAKER

September 29, 2016



Above photo by Laura Clayton Baker



Above photo by Ty Miller



Above: The view from the 2nd floor balcony across the courtyard.
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Above: The view from the back balcony towards the street side, showing the cantilevered 2nd floor.
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Above: Lettering is still etched on the upper windows from an old watchmaker's shop. Windows on both sides of the space make for a light filled interior.
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Above and below: The shapes of the planters and the curving stairs enliven the courtyard.
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



(Above: photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



(Above: photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Above: The stairs are cantilevered from a central concrete spine.
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Stairs (Photographic Study) Continued - Above: The stairs are cantilevered from a central concrete spine.

(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Above: Louvers block glare from the offices on the east side of the building.
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Above: The railing on the left is a graphic element in the design.
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Above: The view from our office, which I've enjoyed for almost 23 years.
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Caffe Luxxe
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)



Caffè Luxxe
(photo by Laura Clayton Baker)

**ATTACHMENT
B**

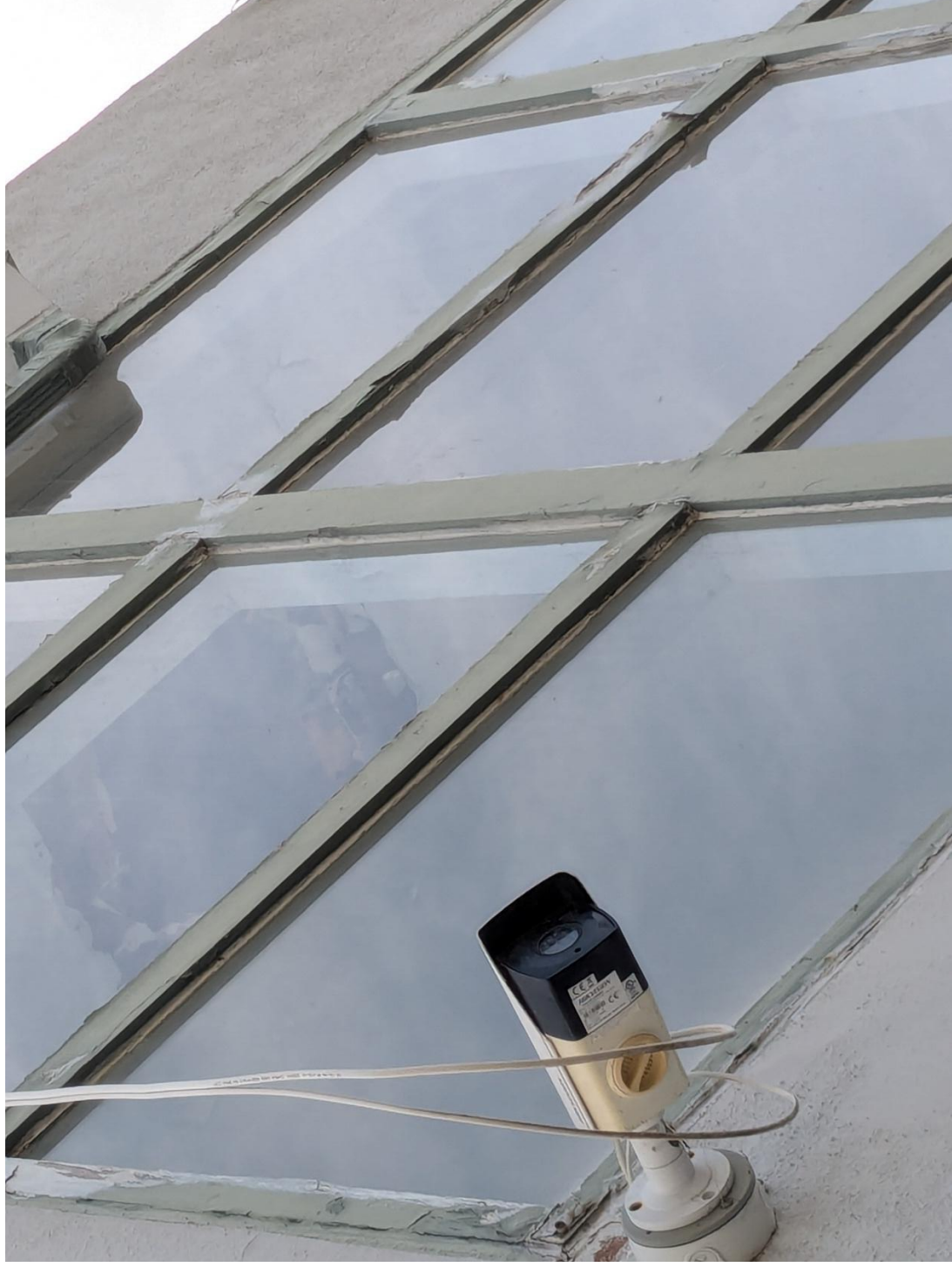
Photos of The Barry Building (Exterior)
11973 – 11975 San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90049



1. West Side showing Open Windows, 02-03-2025 (Circled in red)



2. North Side showing deterioration, 02-03-2025



3. Deterioration around window frame, 02-03-2025



4. West Side showing open windows, 03-10-2026 (Circled in red; one year later from Photo 1)



5. West Side of South Wing showing Open Windows, 03-10-2026 (Circled in red)



6. East Side_ Showing open Windows, 03-10-2026 (Circled in red)

Photos of The Barry Building (Courtyard)
11973 – 11975 San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90049



1. Court Yard showing flaking paint and deteriorated conditions, 04-13-2026



2. Court Yard showing deteriorating staircase and walkway, 04-13-2026



3. Court Yard showing deteriorating staircase and walkway, 04-13-2026



4. Court Yard showing both deteriorating staircases, 04-13-2026



5. Court Yard showing deteriorating louvers, 04-13-2026



6. Court Yard showing flaking paint, 04-13-2026



7. Flaking and Rusting steel column, 04-13-2026

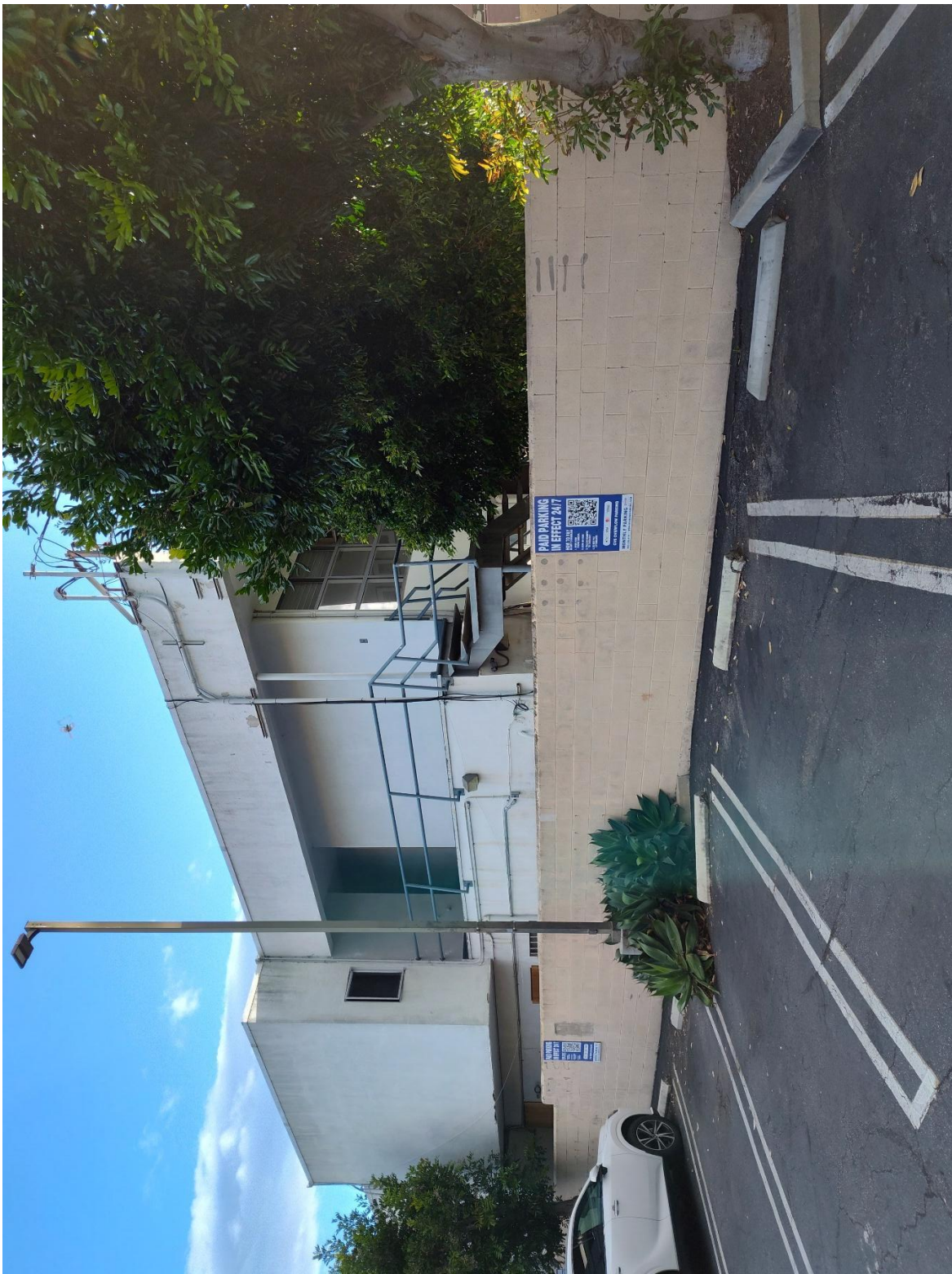
Photos of the Adjacent Building (Exterior)

Contrasting the Care and Condition

11961 - 11969 San Vicente Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90049



1. East Side of 11961 San Vicente



2. East Side of 11961 San Vicente



3. North Side of 11961 San Vicente



4. South-East Side of 11961 San Vicente