

La Jolla Highlands, Unit 2 Architectural Committee

August 24, 2025

Dr. Emmett Cunningham and Dr. Sharon Shaw
2734 Bordeaux Avenue
La Jolla, CA 92037

Dear Emmett and Sharon,

In compliance with the deed restriction requirement that no building, other structure, or improvement may commence until the complete plans and specifications have been approved in writing by the Architectural Committee as stated in the Building Restrictions and Architectural Control (CCRs) for La Jolla Highlands Unit 2, Island Architects has shared the latest revision of plans for the proposed auxiliary structure at 2734 Bordeaux Ave, which we appreciate. This letter addresses our findings about the revised plan.

It is useful to summarize our deliberations to date on this proposed project. As you know, the Architectural Committee did not approve the original design (hereinafter referred to as Plan A) for reasons outlined in our letter of July 10, 2023. While that letter summarized many reasons why Plan A was inconsistent with the neighborhood character and why it was opposed by all nearby neighbors with canyon adjacent lots, the primary finding was that the design exceeded one story in height which is allowed only by exception by the Architectural Committee, which we declined to grant. Subsequently at your direction, Island Architects took many of the neighbors' points into consideration and submitted a revised plan (referred to as Plan B), a single-story design with a footprint brought back from the north property line that addressed some of the neighbors' comments regarding the impact on view corridors. Even with these positive revisions, the majority of neighbors still opposed approving a new separate structure that was lower on the canyon slope than any existing structure on any similar adjacent lot. However, because the Architectural Committee viewed Plan B as responsive to some of the neighbors' comments and as consistent with the one-story restriction of the CCRs, we approved the design contingent on the City's detailed review of the feasibility of the project and of the wider biological, geotechnical, and environmental issues that we felt were beyond the scope of our Committee.

We now understand from Island Architects' letter of July 28, 2025 that the City would not permit Plan B because the footprint was outside of the lot's allowable development area. The City's response is not surprising, and it aligns with a fundamental point made by many neighbors in our deliberations for Plan A: the over-6300 square-foot main house at 2734 Bordeaux is already much larger than any other residence in our subdivision, and the remaining lot area cannot accommodate an additional structure. This view was particularly strong among those who remember the neighborhood uproar to Island Architects' original design for the main house that exceeded 9000 sq ft.

The architect has now shared a modified design package, referred to as Plan C, which relocates the envisioned auxiliary structure back against the northern property line and significantly changes its design in an attempt to fit the desired functionality within the City-designated approved development area. This new design includes significant new excavation into the existing canyon slope, and an

increase in rooftop height of the north section by over four feet relative to Plan B. Most importantly, the proposed structure's overall height is now 22 feet from the ADU living floor (sections B and C) to the ADU study plate (section A), which is clearly more than one story in height. This is not allowed by the CCRs ("no dwelling without the written approval of the Architectural Committee shall be more than one story in height") and due to neighbor sentiment, we will not grant an exception in this case. Indeed, notwithstanding the architect's assertion that this is a one-story structure because "buried basement is not considered a story since it is below grade," Plan C is clearly a two-story design. The west side of the lower floor with its wall of unobstructed, above ground floor-to-ceiling windows is obviously not "buried" in any sense of the word simply because its east side is excavated back into the hillside. Not counting the east side of the kitchen / living area in the GFA total because it happens to be behind an imaginary line where the hillside used to be strikes us as similarly dubious.

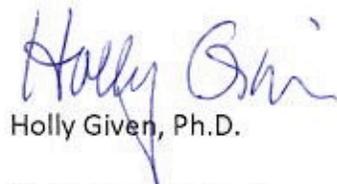
In our July 2023 letter detailing the strong neighborhood consensus opposing Plan A, we said that the owners of the six adjacent canyon properties to the northeast and the south of 2734 Bordeaux were categorically opposed to new construction on any canyon-facing lot downslope of the site intended for the main house. This has not changed, and until your initial proposal no such structure had ever been proposed. Concerns remain about the effect of any canyon slope excavation or construction on the stability and safety of adjacent canyon properties, and the strong desire to protect the canyon's natural state for the mutual enjoyment of all. Owners feel strongly on this point even knowing it means they are inherently limiting their option to develop their own downslope properties in the future.

In approving Plan B, the Committee took the gamble to trust the City to determine whether a structure consistent with the neighborhood restrictions could safely be built within the remaining development area, and they have given their answer. After having considered three designs now, it is difficult to envision a path to approval for an additional building on your lot. This would be a precedent that the neighborhood finds very concerning and that some are likely to oppose in all forthcoming City hearings and beyond.

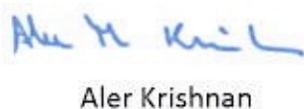
We refer to your commitment made at the neighborhood meeting in 2023 to defer any construction until after you are actually residing here. We think this is a very wise plan in that it will give you a deeper experience of your property and its environmental setting, and perhaps an expanded understanding of your neighbors' viewpoints. We are sure our conclusion is disappointing, and of course we are happy to discuss this with you further.

Sincerely,

Your Architectural Committee



Holly Given, Ph.D.



Aler Krishnan



Helene Guilpan

Cc: Island Architects

