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Owner hopes for quick sale of Orinda eyesore

By Sora O'Doherty



Following a rather long and difficult path, the property at 6 Linda Vista in Orinda may soon be sold as a teardown. Built in 1939, the small two-story cottage occupied a wooded, nonconforming lot in the Orinda hills, on a little over a quarter of an acre. The home was occupied for many years by one owner, who passed away at the age of 93 in 2012. His estate sold the property to a local builder, Brian Purcell, who tried to redevelop the property with a large residence for his own family, but was faced with resistance from some of the neighbors, who objected to the plans. Purcell says that even though other neighbors welcomed his plan, he did not submit the plan to the city for approval, owing to the resistance he had met. Instead Purcell sold it to a woman who thought she could redevelop it for sale.

Purcell design rendering Image provided

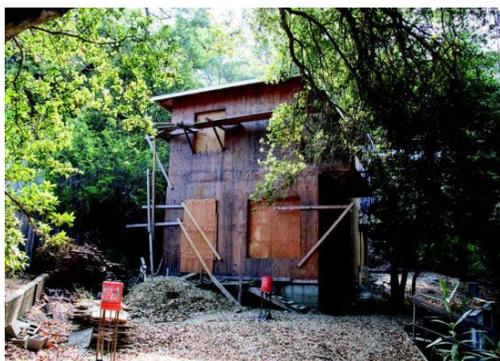
The new owner, Anna Siu, began on a renovation, but had many problems. The building was taken down to the

beams, and, as work failed to progress, the property fell into disrepair. The Linda Vista neighbors filed a petition with the city in April 2016, seeking redress for the public nuisance. Siu defaulted on her loan at the end of 2017 and the property was repossessed by Crosswind Venture Fund LP.

The property went to auction in January 2018, with a listed price of \$947,500, but failed to sell. According to neighbor Susan Lucier, the spokesperson for the Linda Vista neighbors, there is currently a \$1.4 million lien on the property, far in excess of the \$759,145 current assessed value of the property. The house sits now in a boarded up condition, a dangerous eyesore cordoned off by the city with chain link fence. Orinda has responded to requests from the neighborhood to address potential fire danger at the property.

Drummond Buckley, Orinda's planning director, summarized the history of 6 Linda Vista. "For a long time it was an 'active' construction site, although the construction was taking place very slowly. More recently the construction site was abandoned and the property changed hands. The new owners boarded up the unfinished structure as part of a nuisance abatement code enforcement case by the city. However they never got the required 'board up permit' from the County. We re-opened the case recently when we learned that neighbors are still very concerned."

The neighbors have filed complaints with the County Building Department, alleging that there are code enforcement issues with the property. The Lamorinda Weekly contacted the current owner and spoke with Doug Cochrane, VP of loan production at Crosswind Financial. "Our goal is to sell the property," he said. "We are currently interviewing local realtors with expertise in lot sales, who know the market," he added. Cochrane expects that the property will be listed with a local realtor in the near future, probably as a teardown. "I'm not sure if we'll have to take a loss on it," he said. "We've looked at a lot of different options, and hopefully we can get this resolved soon."



Current status Photo Sora O'Doherty

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