



NEWS RELEASE
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CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Thursday, June 16, 2022
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City to revoke building permits for Sierra Drive
‘monster house’ project

HONOLULU – The Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) has begun the process to revoke building permits for a controversial multi-dwelling project on Sierra Drive after additional review of the project’s plans determined that the applicant submitted incorrect information to DPP and that the project is in violation of the city’s “monster homes” ordinance.

In addition to the revocation of the permits, the DPP issued notices of violation and stop-work orders to the developer/owner. The applicant is entitled to appeal the revocation to the Building Board of Appeals. (See attached letter to the applicant.)

The DPP issued three building permits for the project at 3615 Sierra Drive. However, the DPP recently re-reviewed the plans and determined that incorrect information was provided to DPP, including the floor area ratio (FAR) that exceeded a threshold under the city’s monster homes ordinance. The FAR is significant in determining the applicable restrictions under the ordinance. The project also exceeds the number of permitted bathrooms, wet bars and does not provide sufficient side yards.

Additionally, the DPP is in the process of revoking building permits for projects in East Honolulu, which similarly violate the monster homes ordinance. The DPP has received many complaints from the community, which prompted the Department’s hard look at these projects.

“The DPP strives to ensure lawful permitting of construction, to uphold the intent of the ‘monster homes’ ordinances to protect and preserve the character and livability of our residential neighborhoods, and to condemn and curtail regulatory abuses by applicants and others,” said Dawn Takeuchi Apuna, DPP deputy director. “It doesn’t end here. We are doing thorough reviews of other suspected monster homes and will take similar action if necessary.”

The DPP has taken further steps to assure a more effective process in catching and preventing these types of errors, including investigations of personnel, a departmental directive on plan reviews and inspections, and filing of complaints to the Regulated Industries Complaints Office of the state Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs of improper submittals by state-licensed professionals.

3615 Sierra Drive News:

- <https://www.civilbeat.org/2022/07/denby-fawcett-make-monster-house-owners-tear-them-down>
- <https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/the-conversation/2024-02-13/planning-and-permitting-department-oahu-monster-home>
- <https://www.khon2.com/local-news/kaimuki-residents-are-calling-for-monster-home-to-be-torn-down>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aSQQ3RckT2w>