

Dharma Ocean's Lies and Land Use Violation

This statement is written for Crestone residents, the Manitou Foundation, it's land grantees, Dharma Ocean members, and other concerned parties.

During the winter of 2009/2010, I worked for Dharma Ocean Foundation (DOF) as Programs and Facilities Manager. At this time the organization was completing the planning stage of it's new residence hall at what was then known as the Dharma Ocean Retreat Center (DORC).

The DORC, located at 2541 Carefree Way, Crestone, CO was built on land granted by the Manitou Foundation, which placed a conservation easement on the deed. In my understanding this easement was intended to protect the land from overdevelopment and overuse. One provision concerned the number of residential occupants that are allowed on a given parcel or building footprint (At this time I have been unable to procure a copy of the deed to confirm the exact wording).

Knowing that their plans for the residence hall exceeded these occupancy restrictions, Dharma Ocean leadership, including Reggie Ray and senior teacher / major donor Al Blum, commissioned blueprints that mislabelled the dorms in the basement. If I recall correctly, these cavernous rooms house up to 32 people. They are adjacent to large bathroom facilities and a kitchen. On the blueprints given to Manitou, the rooms were labeled "Storage."

Al Blum instructed Dharma Ocean staff members, including myself, to lie to representatives of the Manitou Foundation at a meeting held to review the organization's application. When they predictably asked about the extraordinary amount of storage space on the plans, we verbally stuck to the lie that these rooms were intended for storage only.

While I cannot say whether we were believed, I walked away with the impression that we had executed a form of trickery that was careful, malicious, and quite typical for Reggie and Al.

The moment was one example of a culture of casual dishonesty, manipulation, and abuse on the part of Reggie, Al, and other Dharma Ocean leaders that I observed over several years working closely with them.

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