

Roger Williams  
39 Fountain Drive West, 2C  
Ocean City, MD 21842  
[Jetlag4@aol.com](mailto:Jetlag4@aol.com)

January 28, 2020, 1:00 pm

Maryland General Assembly Environment and Transportation Committee hearing

***Re: HB 30 Condominiums – Disclosures to Unit Owners and Prohibited Provisions in Instruments by Developers (Sunset Island Act)***

Position: SUPPORT with Sponsor's Amendments

Chairman Kumar Barve, Vice Chair Dana Stein, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Roger Williams and my wife Denise and I own a condominium at Sunset Island in Ocean City. We bought our condo in 2006 with visions that it would be a nice relaxing beachfront property. My wife and I have both vacationed in Ocean City since we were kids. It was our dream to buy a home in Ocean City.

After retiring in 2014, I volunteered to serve on the condo association board and in 2015 I was elected board president.

So in addition to representing my family, I am also here speaking for the other 197 families that have been so devastatingly affected by the actions of the builder, NVR/Ryan Homes and the prior board.

One of the problems that became evident after I took office was an issue of water infiltration problems throughout the complex. When those problems reappeared in 2016, even though I was board president, I had no knowledge of the confidential release agreement that was agreed to with Ryan Homes in 2010 and which released Ryan Homes from all future responsibility for making repairs.

Let me say that again, as board president, I did not know that this agreement was in existence. And I couldn't have known because the agreement barred the prior board from disclosing its terms to homeowners.

Over the past three plus years I have spent thousands of hours trying to find a solution to the problems. In 2017, we had to pass a special assessment to make emergency repairs to several of the buildings to keep them from falling down. In September of 2019, we passed another special

assessment to make the full repairs. In total, we will have to spend \$10MM to repair the buildings, not only to stop the water infiltration but to also fix building code violations uncovered as part of our investigations. That works out to a cost of over \$50,000 per homeowner. Compounding matters, the average assessed value of the condos has decreased by an additional \$40,000 because of the damage.

I support House Bill 30-2020, the Sunset Island Act.

A volunteer board made up of fellow homeowners must not have the authority to enter into these types of agreements without informing owners. The entire premise of the MD Condo Act is that meetings and board actions are done in the open. Signing away the rights of owners without their knowledge is unfair and now must become illegal.

In closing, I mentioned the thousands of hours that I have spent on this matter. But it hasn't been by myself. Condo Boards are almost always made up of volunteers with varying experience. Through this ordeal, I've had unbelievable support from other board members and other homeowners. People from all walks of life and with tremendous experience. Lawyers, bankers, contractors to name a few. I have no doubt that had the law been on the books back in 2010, different decisions would have been made and we would not be in the situation we are now.

I appreciate the effort of the legislators who have drafted this bill and have met with us and worked hard to try and find a solution to our problem at hand.

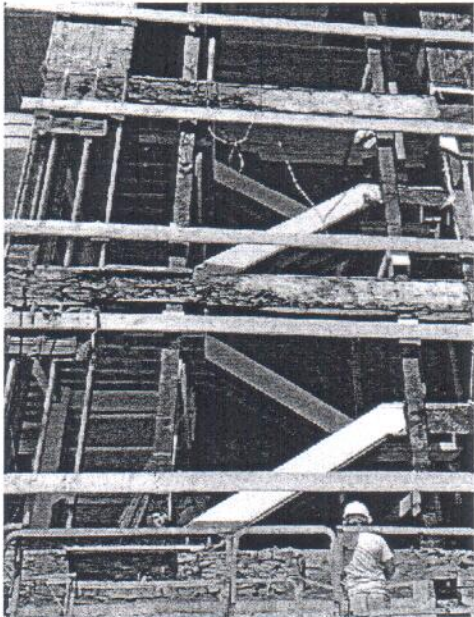
Thank you.

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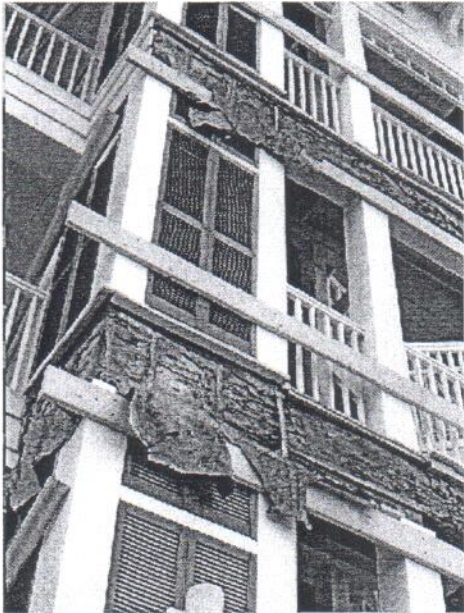
In-process photos of discovery phases



1FDE East Tower, 3rd Floor, East face. (See evidence sample)



4FDE North Tower, Degradation of structural members at all levels



4FDE North Tower, degradation at return walls