

**Response to Neighbor's Letter
On 283 E. 19th St, Costa Mesa**

May 23, 2022

We have received the letter by my neighbor, Mr. & Mrs. Fred & Karen Arnold, from Mr. Chris Yeager today. Below are my responses to some of the statements they made in their letter.

1. I am truly not aware of any such verbal agreement that "our houses would not grow". I respect Mr. And Mrs. Arnold deeply, so any discussion about property adjustments, even landscaping, is taken to heart and thoroughly considered. They have always been sweet, understanding, and helpful since I've lived here. I'm surprised to learn about their rejection of the proposed project.
2. At our understating, our builder Mr. Lin He, went to Mr. & Mrs. Arnold's house to discuss the project three times before the 08/06/21 meeting referred in their letter. Mr. & Mrs. Arnold gave Mr. He a tour of their side yard and backyard, pointing to the potential effect of the changes to their house and yard. They sat down in their dining table, studied the plan they already printed out (Mr. He brought his copy as well). Since Mr. Fred Arnold was also a builder, their discussions were very detailed and technical, per Mr. He. Several modifications were proposed and discussed. During those meetings, Mr. Fred at times seemed to be open to solutions, as I was told, to address his concern and alluded that his patio could use a fix-up. Sometimes he was adamant that this project in no way can move forward.
3. In the hope of allowing all voices to be heard in a compassionate and fair manner, I invited Mr. & Mrs. Arnold to my house on 08/06/2022 as mentioned in their email. Mr. He was in attendance. Mr. He presented the possible modifications again. Mr. Arnold responded with the need to address his poor state of health and family history, issues that were irrelevant to the project, and was resistant to any and all alternatives. I could feel his anxiety over the project, and I was willing to sit quietly and listen to his many dissatisfactions of issues outside of the project meeting (regarding local crime, surgical procedures, snakes, his children). Even though he emphatically stated, "I will fight until my last breath", I only responded that I am happy regardless of any outcome. It is within my right to have peace, as it is his, but I cannot control the direction and intensity of each sunrise and sunset. Mrs. Arnold appeared quite neutral overall, and calmly went with the flow, if I am not mistaken. It is not my intention whatsoever to cause tension; there is no benefit. I can only hope to maintain my personal sanctuary through a kind attitude, and I cannot control anyone else's reaction at the end of the day. If there is any other way to make them happy without sacrificing my rights, I would be more than happy to hear the options.

4. Per Mr. He, who is the original developer of the property, there was no agreement that the existing 2nd story windows facing the west would remain as “awning” windows. This is because there was no certainty at that time and Mr. He couldn’t promise him what the buyer of the property would do. The awning windows were put in place after modifying the original design at the request from Mr. Arnold. I think Mr. Arnold meant clerestory windows in the form of awning windows when he used the word “awning” window.

The main motivation behind this room addition is to add a separate room as well as my own retreat. I am a single mom with full custody of two very active boys at age of 12 and 8. It is quite draining to keep up with them day and night, especially since COVID. I would love to have a moment of silence for my daily meditations, especially with a view of my garden and nature. Increasing property value is also a way to justify the cost that will go into the project.

I believe our design complies with all the code requirements per the reviews by the Planning Department and Building Department. This project’s impact on the neighbor’s property is no different than any other room-addition projects. However, in the spirit of collaboration and compromise, I am willing to address their concern about the two awning windows. I am willing to reverse those two windows back to clerestory windows in the form of awning windows.

This project has been stalled for well over two years. I have explored every possible way to address their concerns. It would be a dream come true to move the project forward. I appreciate your time and consideration of this project.

Anne Nguyen
Owner, 283 E. 19th St, Costa Mesa