

Dear Board of Building Appeals:

As the vice president of New Life Evangelistic Center, I want to register this complaint on how my co-worker and I were excluded from your public meeting held on June 27, 2019.

Several days earlier our attorney informed us that the Board would meet June 27 at 1:00 pm to vote on approval of a written decision containing facts and conclusions of law concerning our building permit. The meeting was to be held at City Hall in room 208. We were welcome to attend.

The problem is that, although we made a good-faith effort to attend the meeting, we were never actually allowed in to witness the vote and discussion. Due to a combination of misinformation and what I see as negligence, we missed it entirely, even though we spent nearly two hours at City Hall.

My co-worker Chris Ohnimus and I arrived at room 208 in time for the 1:00 pm meeting. But when we got there, no meeting was in progress. However, since we saw numerous people entering the room, we thought we were in the right place. We soon realized that some other committee was about to hold their own meeting, and we were in the wrong place. Upon inquiring about the Board of Building Appeals, we were directed to the 4th floor.

It was about 1:15 pm when we found the right room. The Board was meeting behind a closed door, so we approached the receptionist, who showed me a printed agenda. She asked me if I saw my property listed there. I answered, "Yes," because I could see 1411 Locust St. last on the list (I think it was number four). The receptionist said that we should take a seat with the other people who were waiting (there were about ten of them), and someone would alert us when our property came up for discussion.

We waited patiently, as other groups were called into the board room. Finally, we were the last ones remaining. Chris and I moved back into the reception area and took seats there. (Previously we were part of the overflow in the hallway.) Then we waited again in the reception area.

Finally, an employee called my name and told us that the matter had actually been handled first, and the vote was already taken.

My question is: Why didn't someone tell us that when we first arrived? Why were we made to wait--first in the hallway and then in the reception area--for about an hour and a half? Why did the receptionist mislead me by showing our property last on the agenda, when in fact it was dealt with first?

I don't know what was discussed behind closed doors. Perhaps I never will. But I think there is a good chance that if my co-worker and I had been admitted to the meeting at the time we arrived, we could have witnessed at least part of the deliberations. It appears to me that we were systematically excluded. If not systematically excluded, then we were blatantly disregarded.

New Life Evangelistic Center is a party in this case, and we should have been received into the meeting.

Sincerely,

Rev. Raymond K. Redlich
Vice Pres., New Life Evangelistic Center