

L.A.'s top building chief says he's been cleared in ethics complaint



Architectural rendering of the 39- and 35-story Millennium Hollywood towers. (Millennium)
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Los Angeles' top building official said he has been cleared of wrongdoing related to an ethics complaint filed by an opponent of a controversial Hollywood skyscraper project.

"I just received good news from the Ethics Commission that they have dismissed the false and baseless allegation that was filed against me," Raymond Chan, the interim general manager of the Department of Building and Safety, said in an email to undisclosed recipients Thursday and reviewed by The Times.

"I am very happy that this dark cloud is removed," Chan wrote.

The ethics complaint filed in September raised questions about Chan and his son's employment with the law firm Sheppard Mullin, the lead counsel for the [Millennium Hollywood project](#).

The complaint, filed by George Abrahams, a leading opponent of the development, said "it would certainly have the appearance of a conflict of interest" for Chan to make decisions regarding the skyscraper project while his son was "simultaneously working for Sheppard Mullin, the project's chief advocate at City Hall."

<https://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-building-chief-ethics-complaint-20131025-story.html>

Jerry Neuman, a lawyer for Sheppard Mullin, has said that Chan's son, Jeremy, was a law student at Southwestern Law School in Los Angeles and a paid student intern between January and May.

Neuman has said the firm made sure that there was a wall between the work performed by Chan's son and any business the law firm had with the Department of Building and Safety.

The agency's enforcement director, Neama Rahmani, said city law bars him from commenting on whether an investigation has been closed. Public disclosure about ethics commission actions typically comes when the watchdog agency imposes fines.

John Schwada, a spokesman for the opponents of the Millennium project, raised concerns about how there was no independent confirmation of whether the ethics agency cleared Chan.

"We're far from satisfied that the public or the complainants got a fair shake," Schwada said.