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Millennium Hollywood Tower opponents file ethics complaint



Architectural rendering of the 39- and 35-story Millennium Hollywood towers. (Millennium)

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An opponent of the controversial Millennium Hollywood skyscraper project has filed an ethics complaint against the city's top building official, accusing him of a conflict of interest.

The complaint comes after the [project's opponents sued](#) the city and developer, seeking to overturn Los Angeles' approval of the 39- and 35-story towers.

The lawsuit, filed in Los Angeles Superior Court, alleges that the city failed to disclose important information on [how close the skyscrapers are](#) to the Hollywood fault, which has been declared active by the state and is capable of producing an earthquake of a magnitude greater than 7.0.

The ethics complaint raises questions about the interim general manager of the city's Department of Building and Safety, Raymond Chan, and his son's employment with the Millennium developer's law firm, Sheppard Mullin, the developer's lead counsel on the project.

"It would certainly have the appearance of a conflict of interest for Raymond Chan to oversee and make critical administrative decisions regarding the Millennium Project if his son were simultaneously working for Sheppard Mullin, the project's chief advocate at City Hall," said the complaint, filed by George Abrahams, a leading opponent of the development.

Chan declined to comment through a city spokesman, who said city rules bar city employees from commenting on complaints filed to the ethics commission.

"However, I can say that Mr. Chan is confident of being exonerated," said Luke Zamperini, spokesman for the city's Department of Building and Safety.

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

Neuman said it was normal for the firm to hire a few student interns for a semester. He said Raymond Chan did not ask anyone at the law firm to hire his son.

Neuman said the firm was aware that Jeremy Chan was Raymond Chan's son. "We made sure that ... there was an ethical wall between him and any work that Sheppard Mullin did that involved Building and Safety," Neuman said.

He said Jeremy Chan was hired in part because of his experience as a summer intern with the city attorney's office in the land use and real estate divisions.

"We often look for students with that sort of experience," Neuman said.

Jeremy Chan could not be reached for comment