

# Preserving Venice Canal: No to 414 Carroll Canal Development

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From: **Gia Quiroga** | gia.sandina@gmail.com

Wednesday,  
Jul 26 at  
5:12 PM

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Cc: **Gia Quiroga** | gia.sandina@gmail.com

Dear All,

I hope this email finds you well. As a long-time resident of Venice Canal and proud property owner, I am writing to express my deep concern about the proposed development of 414 Carroll Canal. The Venice Canal district is a unique and cherished part of our city's history, and any new construction must respect and preserve its character and charm.

As you may know, the Venice Canal district was originally developed by Abbot Kinney in 1905 as part of his vision for a "Venice of America." Since then, the canals have been a beloved destination for residents and visitors alike, offering a peaceful retreat from the hustle and bustle of city life.

As a fellow property owner in this historic district, I believe it is our responsibility to ensure that any new development is in keeping with the highest standards of safety, environmental responsibility, and community character. I urge you to join me in opposing the proposed project at 414 Carroll Canal and advocating for a thoughtful and responsible approach to development in our beloved Venice Canal district.

I became well acquainted with this property as I was renting 416 Carroll Canal most of last year. The description of 414's project, site, outreach, and the context are erroneous and misleading.

**Flood Zone:** The new flood requirements are essential. Winters bring extreme flooding to this property as well as each of the neighboring lots and the alley. I can share pictures of the totally flooded-out yard of 414. The owner was nowhere to be seen. Neighbors helped drain it and the severely flooded alley. Neighbors use sandbags to reduce flooding from the alley but groundwater, itself, rises in the front and backyards. We get swamped 6 inches deep. Many immediately adjacent neighbors had to sump pump under their houses for days during several storms.

Absolutely no exception should be given to compliance with the flood level requirements. We have already experienced flooding at this site and climate change has only just begun to show its affects. The alley has huge potholes as a result of the flooding. The canals do not drain properly - ask the Venice Canals Association. To allow a variance from the new law would counter the wisdom of environmental scientists and guidelines of the Coastal

Commission.

**Scale:** Failure to comply with the flood regulations would cause this property's deck to violate the scale of the surrounding area. Height restrictions and setbacks must be adhered to.

The proposal suggests that the owner would not entertain on the front deck if given a variance, however, the owner has repeatedly suggested that he wants to do exactly that. He speaks of the openness of kibbutz life and wants to eliminate all barriers in the front on both sides of his property. I'm sorry if the owner is a sad, lonely man. However, "good fences make good neighbors."

The owner of 416 Carroll and the current tenant of 414 Carroll have actually placed large planters along those front property lines so as to increase their privacy. The owner of 414 has not lived at this property. He does not have an understanding of what is needed to live harmoniously on a little lot on the canals.

The laws were changed for the safety and benefit of all. All new construction must comply. This owner and his (inexperienced) architect have ample time to redraw their plans so as to comply.

To complain that losing 5 or 6 feet of ground space is a hardship, fails to recognize that this design is grossly over-building on this tiny lot. The 2 story duplex design has the minimum of side set backs (less than if it were a 3 story), so the minimum of privacy, it includes a 4 bedroom home plus an additional one bedroom apartment, with 2 kitchens, 4 bathrooms, 5 parking spaces and an elevator (!!!) all on this tiny 30 x 90 lot.

The proposal mentions permeable surfaces, but there is nearly no open space. The entire lot is built-out to the max... and now they are asking for variances to build more than the code permits?

**Character:** The application fails to accurately describe this historic 1920 Mediterranean style home and that it is within a series of historic homes on Carroll Canal. Despite alterations, all 5 homes from Dell to, and including this one, continue to retain the distinctive historic character of Venice's most historic neighborhood, the Venice Canals. They vary from bungalow to cottage to mediterranean, all in their unique 1920's styles, with contemporary upgrades that do not destroy the character.

The proposed design of 414 is the worst of nondescript boxes, maxing out space with no regard for the character of the community nor its affects on adjacent neighbors.

Other historic houses have retained their character by building behind and atop their original historic cottage. This could easily be done here, so as to respect the integrity of our most historic cultural neighborhood of Venice.

SurveyLA is notorious for overlooking historic properties. It includes 410 Carroll Canal that has its facade radically altered, but in character, and 408 Carroll that had a second floor added behind, but also in character. That's how thoughtful design is done. This too should be thoughtfully redesigned, not bulldozed (dumped in a landfill isn't as eco friendly as they suggest they are), so as to retain its unique historic character: pull it back; build behind and above; do something interesting not a nondescript box. Venice, and particularly the Venice Canals deserve better.

The owner bought this home knowing it was built in the 1920's. One can merely look around on Carroll Canal to see this charming Mediterranean style historic architecture. Many images exist of it from the 1920's showing the same distinctive design and footprint. Any experienced architect in Venice knows that SurveyLA was an indicator but cannot be relied upon. It overlooked numerous historic properties of significance.

How do they have the right to build a duplex? The original 2nd unit was legally removed years ago. This area is not zoned for duplexes and this is not an "accessory" ADU, it is fully incorporated into the house construction. How can he claim that it is not an historic house and then claim that he can build a duplex because it had an historic duplex? What a crazy manipulation!

They claim that they won't need to use air conditioning but they have nearly no cross ventilation: they have no windows to the south and very few to the north. This is true for both the ground floor apartment and second floor four bedroom McMansion. This design would bake in West facing sun with no air flow to cool it down naturally.

This poor design would also unfairly tax the 100 year old electrical and water systems that already have blackouts and water main failures. Both infrastructure failures occurred on Carroll Canal while I lived at 416.

Has this architect ever built on the Canals? in Venice? or anywhere?

Most contemporary houses on the canals put windows on the North and South and limit windows along their sides. This provides for airflow, views and privacy for neighbors on these narrow lots. This 414 design does the opposite. It would be totally dependent upon air conditioning despite being 2 blocks from the beach. That alone should be illegal.

The proposed development at 414 Carroll Canal has the potential to impact on what is determined to be considered a historical significance. As a resident of the Venice Canals, I believe it is our responsibility to protect and preserve our unique cultural heritage for future generations.

As a resident, I am aware that a handful of persistent residents are considering a class action lawsuit regarding SurveyLA and the potential double standard that takes place with development permits. While I support the efforts of those considering legal action, I also recognize that litigation can be costly on a city and create a ripple effect across the city of Los Angeles.

Therefore, I urge the city of Venice and Los Angeles to take immediate action to rectify any discriminatory treatment of historical property owners and ensure that regulations are applied equitably to all residents. This can be achieved through open dialogue and collaboration between residents, developers, and city officials.

**Equality:** The proposal describes "old" houses on Carroll Canal. In fact, many are beautiful historic treasures that have been thoughtfully restored.

The proposed development at 414 Carroll Canal has the potential to impact what SurveyLA has determined to be considered a historical significance. As a resident of the Venice Canals, I believe it is our responsibility to protect and preserve our unique cultural heritage for future generations.

Furthermore, you should be aware that residents with significant financial resources and free time are exploring the possibility of a class-action lawsuit related to SurveyLA and potential discrepancies in the issuance of development permits.

Therefore, I urge the city of Venice and Los Angeles to take immediate action to rectify any discriminatory treatment of historical property owners and ensure that regulations are applied equitably to all residents. This can be achieved through open dialogue and collaboration between residents, developers, and city officials.

**Outreach:** I got to know many of the neighbors when living at 416 Carroll Canal. The plans for 414 were not well received. Neighbors signed the owners "Contact Information Sheet" when he hosted a wine and cheese gathering a few years ago. They did not look carefully at his design and certainly did not consider this a showing of "support" for his plans.

He and his architect speak in eloquent voices but they are presenting a thoughtless and inappropriate design that fails to respect the uniqueness of this site and the community. Several neighbors described it as typical of someone who has never built in the canals. It's a tight community and, unlike this brash new owner, neighbors try to be respectful on other peoples space, the environment and our unique historic character.

I speak for my friends and neighbors on Carroll and Linnie Canals who are hoping that the LUPC, City and Coastal Commission will not allow this inappropriate, poorly designed, overbuilt and unsafe project to move forward.

Venice deserves better. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gia  
Linnie Canal  
Venice, CA. 90291

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