

Whatcha Gonna Do?

The Situation

Landscape architects Lots & Lots presented an exclusive forty-lot subdivision plan for approval to the county zoning commission on behalf of its client, Shy O. Cash Associates. Does this story sound familiar so far? Although three rear lots seemed to place stress on the sensitive ecology of the site, they had a positive impact on the financial bottom line. Lots & Lots used its reputation and credibility to justify these questionable intrusions, and the plans were approved.

The commission never questioned who the applicants, Shy O. Cash Associates, really were, so it was never divulged that Lots & Lots was given a ten percent stake in the venture for deferring payment of its fees until the sale of the last ten lots began and all other debt was satisfied.

Whatcha Gonna Do?

Was it ethical for Lots & Lots to become part of the development team under these circumstances?

Recommendation of the Ethics Committee

There is no prohibition to Lots & Lots becoming part of Shy O. Cash



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Associates; however, once firms become partners, they have an obligation to make that information available to the commission. For not doing so, the Ethics Committee found Lots & Lots in violation of R1.201, which states, “Members making public statements on landscape architecture issues shall disclose compensation other than fee, and their role in any economic interest in a project.”

Editor's Note: One of the objectives of the ASLA Ethics Committee is to educate

members about the ASLA Code and Guidelines for Professional Conduct. The code contains important principles relating to duties to clients and to members of the Society.

Readers are invited to send their comments on cases appearing in LAND to Managing Editor, 636 Eye Street NW, Washington DC 20001-3736 or E-mail to bwelsh@asla.org. Members are invited to submit questions regarding ethical matters along with supporting data to Allen Hixon, FASLA, Ethics Committee Chair, c/o ASLA, 636 Eye Street NW, Washington DC 20001-3736.

CORRECTIONS

An article titled “Digital Office Series to Address Needs of Landscape Architects” in the November/December 1998 *LAND* should have read that Jerry Laiserin has been invited to lecture at the Rhode Island School of Design rather than stating that he has already lectured at the school.