



3530 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 670  
Los Angeles, CA 90010  
Office: 213.388.4747 Fax: 213.388.6655  
[www.martin-martin.com](http://www.martin-martin.com)

October 25th, 2023

Dear Jeff,

I've had an opportunity to read your October 19 letter. It's taken me some time to respond because I needed to really digest every sentence.

It's ironic to me that you make reference to the symposium I invited you and the Mayor to last November. No one in the meeting may have talked about litigation, however, that doesn't mean that there aren't litigation matters pending across the country including in Tulsa Oklahoma and that litigation is not an appropriate way to seek redress for racial atrocities like section 14. More importantly, there would not be a need for litigation if your clients acted in good faith, and made a reasonable offer to resolve my clients claims. To date, they have done neither.

Further, you must have amnesia. I filed the notice of claim regarding litigation after efforts to resolve the matter without litigation fell miserably. I hope you also will recall that the reason you, Grace Garner and I went to Evanston, Illinois last November was to identify a reparations specialist and to learn more about the reparations program enacted in Evanston and around the country. We all left the conference with a renewed sense of hope that the city now had many options to choose from with regards to specialists, and that one would be hired at the beginning of this year. That didn't happen.

As you know, we entered into tolling agreements so that we would not file a lawsuit pending negotiations involving the specialist. As you also know, your client summarily torpedoed the specialist and by doing so, killed any real efforts at resolving this claim without a lawsuit being filed.

Given that, how dare the city now claim that we are not acting in good faith and we should somehow dismiss our claim, and trust that the city will act in good faith. As it should be expected, my clients are still reeling from the arbitrary and capricious rejection of the country's most renowned academic institution—Columbia University—and its affiliates reparations specialist. Yet, my clients are supposed to trust the process when the process keeps stabbing them in the back? If I didn't know you better, I would think you were trying to gaslight me!

Moving on, your letter definitely has a lot more details about the policy work that the city is engaged in, but similar to your last letter, it does not specifically address the demands made by my clients. Clearly, if this were a personal injury case against a city official involving an auto accident, you would not suggest that the plaintiffs drop their lawsuit against the city because the city held a series of meetings about road safety. Everyone would probably agree that road safety is important and that the city should address it. Notwithstanding, no one would agree that by doing so, the city had satisfied any of its legal obligations to make the injured plaintiffs whole.

Likewise, the city's proposed plans involving the north end and other public forums on racism are not at all a response to the claims for the specific individuals impacted by the demolition of section 14. I do not know why you and your client keep trying to masquerade its routine public policy efforts as a settlement for section 14. The city is not going to get credit for making investments in the poorest communities of Palm Springs.

These efforts and investments should've been made decades ago. Trying to paint the city as some kind of leader in progressive, anti-black policy making is insulting. Clearly it is not. And if it wants credit for addressing the issues of its minority population, it must settle the section 14 claims. Failure to do so, renders many of those other actions performative.

Furthermore, you state that this matter cannot be resolved in closed sessions. That is another disingenuous statement. Of course your clients can use closed sessions to discuss settlement and make recommendations that are then presented in a public meeting. It would be impossible to attempt to resolve these complex claims in a public meeting without the necessary background work having been done by the council and its staff before matters or presented to the public. That is routinely how other matters are handled. Why you are suggesting this process cannot be used with regards to this matter is baffling..

Lastly, your letter states that the city is interested in programmatic efforts to alleviate the impacts of section 14 history. You then cite an example of a city Council plan to provide "affordable housing" to the north end. However, this plan is not the same as the housing demand my clients made. We want a seat at the table and the ability to work in a collaborative way with the city to address issues of housing and making housing available to the victims of section 14.

Moreover, our demand is about elevating the quality of life for African-Americans and Latinos in the city, not continuing to marginalize and segregate them. Clearly, I have not seen the plan that you make reference to. However, on its face, it reeks of the kind of segregated, low budget housing that the minority population in the city has been subjected to for decades.

Are African-Americans only allowed to live in affordable housing that is situated in the north end of the city? Why can't African-Americans live in single-family homes near downtown and other parts of the city where white residents reside? The settlement demand that we made with regards to housing is forward looking and designed to provide African-Americans and Latinos in the city with the same opportunities as non-minority homeowners. My clients want the opportunity to own homes in beautiful neighborhoods where they will accrue equity and build generational wealth in the same way as white residents of the city. Gone are the days were all of the Black and Latino residents of the city will accept being relegated to the outskirts of town, tucked away from the white tourists and God forbid—Life Magazine.

At the end of your letter, you urge my clients to engage in a stakeholder based legislative approach as other communities throughout the country have used. Again this would be comical if it wasn't so tragic. As laid out above, my clients have always been willing to engage in a stakeholder process similar to other communities. In fact, as stated above, I introduced you and the city to those community processes, and the experts that are leading them!

Every one of those other community processes that you are making reference to involve folks like Dr. Linda Mann, Dr. Ron Daniels, Dr. Justin Hansford, Dr. Cheryl Grills and Dr. Julianne Malveaux—renown reparations experts. They do not involve so-called objective historians with no expertise in reparations. They do not involve experts who will engage the community in a costly, lengthy and expensive fishing expedition which rejects findings from their own attorney general and city human rights commission. And they do not involve unlearned and unskilled random people who are handpicked by the perpetrators of the atrocity or those who wish to deny the very existence of the harm!

So you let me know which stakeholder process your client is recommending and I'll let you know my clients' response. Either way, you will be hearing from us one way or the other!

Sincerely,

*Areva Martin*

Areva Martin