

October 3, 2014

The Honorable Mark G. Peters  
Commissioner  
NYC Department of Investigation  
80 Maiden Lane  
New York, NY 10038

Re: Mt. Manresa, Staten Island, NY

Dear Commissioner Peters:

I hope this letter finds you well.

As I am sure you aware, the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is currently investigating Gaspare Santoro, a Certified Asbestos Investigator (NYS DOL Asbestos Handling license #72728), in connection with the work conducted prior to the demolition of Mount Manresa, a former retreat house on Staten Island.

This property was recently purchased and will be developed by Mount Builders, Inc., a company set up by the Savo Brothers to develop the property.

Mr. Santoro, as part of his work, took only 19 total samples from the six buildings and discovered no asbestos. Subsequent to that, in response to 311 complaints, DEP investigators discovered asbestos. Twenty eight violations totaling \$67,400 were issued to Mr. Santoro, the owners of the property, and to the contractor.

The owner of property, upon suggestion of DEP, later retained Asbestos Investigator Paul Jennings to conduct a more thorough investigation. I was informed by DEP that Mr. Jennings took approximately 300 samples from the remaining buildings.

It is striking that Santoro took 19 samples and Jennings took 300. And, while I am not an expert in asbestos investigation, this kind of disparity should not exist.

Something was clearly amiss with the initial assessment. I cannot say whether this was a case of incompetence, something more nefarious, or a combination of the two.

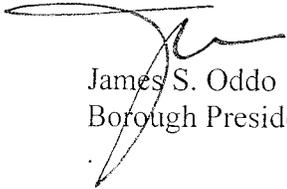


As a result of the questions that currently exist, I am asking your agency to direct any agency charged with the responsibility of issuing permits on this project to not issue any more permits and rescind any that have already been issued until the investigation into Mr. Santoro is complete.

The people of Staten Island want and deserve this project stopped in its tracks until the many unanswered questions are fully and adequately addressed.

I thank you for your time, courtesy, and consideration.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James S. Oddo', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the left.

James S. Oddo  
Borough President