March 10, 2022

Hello Mr. Madani,

Here is the information you require,please let me know if there is anything else I can help with.

(SOFT-LITE LLC  FL-15781-2017 FBC)

sincerely,

Silvia Lino

To: Dept. of the Florida Building Code

C/O Mr. Madani

From: Silvia Lino

4831 SW 168 Ave

Southwest Ranches Fla 33331

Re: Multiple Failures and Building Codes Overridden (Windows)

As per our conversation, on 2/3/2022, I am writing formal complaints

against the contractor Paradise Exterior, LLC., the manufacture Soft-Lite windows, and the Town Of Southwest Ranches who is represented by the C A P inspection company.

The various safety concerns with this company has been going on now for close to 3 years. In that time, Paradise has been unable to get a final inspection passed on the job, but let me provide an overview, followed by a detailed explanation regarding my formal complaints.

In summary, my formal complaint against Paradise Windows and Soft-Lite windows are that I have unsafe and defective windows with multiple inspection failures verified by a water infiltration test conducted by an engineer. My formal complaint against the Town of Southwest Ranches are that despite the town’s inspector failing the windows multiple times, the supervisor passed the windows with out ever inspecting them, overriding FL building codes and the engineer who conducted and a water filtration test (which failed) and the city’s assigned inspector – who also failed the inspection for the same reason. Each detailed below.

On June 2019, I entered into a contract with Paradise Exteriors, LLC. to install impact windows in my home, the job was started on September 23, 2019.

On that date, while they were installing my windows, I noticed a couple of issues.

One of the windows they had installed was cracked, another concern was that all the bottoms of the windows had no bulking installed, and the installers were sanding the concrete in some places.

At that time, I called the office of Paradise Exteriors to speak to Ms. Christine, which was the person who had called me to make the installation appointment; I never received a call back. The workers continued to install all the windows completely and at no time did an inspector come to do any inspection. That night I went around checking the windows and noticed that a lot of them did not open, one was broken and most were dented and scratched. I placed another call to Paradise and left a voice mail about the issues.

The following day an inspector, from the Town of Southwest Ranches, came; according to the inspector, he was there to do the buck inspection. The inspector was very surprised to see that all of the windows were done, and there was no way to check the bucking of the windows. At that time, I asked him if this was the way the windows were suppose to be done? I offered to show him what I had taken pictures of the day before. He asked if he could come in to inspect the windows from the inside, after which he advised me that he was going to fail the inspection for various reasons. Some reasons shared with me were the following: one window, in the bathroom, was not installed according to code. The window was put in place, but not nailed down as required, while another window was installed upside down. {Please see Attachment # 1}.

During the course of about the next year and a half, my windows were changed out. Although, Paradise Exterior and Soft-Lite want to claim that they changed 12 out of 14 windows, out of the goodness of their hearts. The truth is this only happened after the sales rep from Soft-Lite came to inspect the windows and found out that these windows were, in fact, defective. In addition, it was noted that some of the etching for the lamination was done by Soft-lite, which is not a FBC approved laminator; furthermore, there was missing etching on other windows, in addition to dents, and scratches on the *inside* of the laminated panels.

The Town of Southwest Ranches’ CAP inspector advised Paradise that they would allow them to use concrete in replacement of the bottom bucking, which was missing in all the windows. In some windows they added bucking and in other places they replaced the original bucking. As I understand it, when this is practiced, an engineer must review for safety; so proper calculations and guidance can be given regarding how to attach the new wood. No engineer review was completed.

After the original windows were changed out, the second set of 12 windows also had serious safety concerns, as the originals; this included water infiltration. In addition, 2nd set had scratches and one of the windows opened from the wrong side. This last issue, with opening side, has since been corrected. However, safety concerns like water infiltration persisted.

I continued to have open communication with Paradise in the hopes of a satisfactory resolution to my safety concerns. During one of these communications, I called because one of the windows had no sticker; a Mr. Zack at Paradise Exterior told me that if I needed a sticker he would send me a whole roll of NOAs, if that would make me happy.

I wanted to give your dept. a small part of the history regarding the vast safety issues I’ve had with these windows from Paradise Exteriors and the manufacture Soft-Lite, who refuse to speak to me and always refer me to Paradise Exterior.

Mr. Madani, I am an average consumer. I reasoned that buying an expensive product, like hurricane impact windows, was worth the financial sacrifice in order to best protect property and life, should it ever come to that. We, the consumers, place our good faith confidence on the shoulders of the manufactures, their product and their installers. Hurricane impact windows should protect our homes from damages caused by wind, debris and water/air infiltration, this justifies the financial expense. We essentially trust these entities with the protection of our property, our lives and the lives of our loved ones. When products are advertised as Florida Building Code approved or Miami-Dade County Product approved, this is the average consumer’s standard expectation. But this was not the case.

In a letter given to me by Mr. Eric Beckner of Paradise (who is the brother of the owner and I believe the Quality Inspector) the manufacture, Soft-Lite, informed me that only a qualified engineer firm could test for water infiltration.

In July 2021, one year and ten months after the start of the job, there was yet another failed window inspection. On the same date as the failed inspection, a verbal request was made to Mr. E. Beckner, Paradise, to conduct a water infiltration test. Paradise refused to pay for the test. At that time, I advised Mr. E. Beckner that we would pay to have the water infiltration test done on the windows and to please have someone at Paradise to contact us in regard to it.

After waiting for Paradise and not hearing from them, we paid an Engineer firm to conduct that test. (See attachment 2). All 12 windows have the same concern, water infiltration, but due to cost, we could only afford to test one window, but as you will see the result of the water infiltration test, conducted by the engineer, was that the window FAILED.

In August 2021, Paradise Exterior requested a meeting with the supervisor of CAP (Brian Dillon) to inquire regarding the reasoning for the failed inspecting, by the town’s inspector Mario Quinones. Their opinion being that the city appointed inspector was incorrect in failing the windows, at the last inspection.

At that meeting, we presented a copy of the water infiltration report to both Paradise Exterior’s Mr. Eric Beckner, Mr. Zack, and Building Official to the Town of Southwest Ranches CAP Mr. Brian Dillon.

Mr. B. Dillon then advised Paradise exterior that because of the engineer’s report which showed that the window had failed the water/air infiltration test at more than one location, he would be unable to pass the final inspection. He advised Paradise to contact the manufacture and either retest the window

or to bring an engineer report challenging the results.

After almost 2 years of failed inspections, and incomplete work, we had to hire a lawyer to protect our home from a lien, which was placed on October 2020 by Paradise Exterior – when they hadn’t even completed the job or had their final inspection passed! The lien claims that we refused to pay them even thought they still had not passed any inspections and had not finish installing the windows.

So my complaint is the following: On Sept 23,2019 Paradise Exterior LLC with Soft-Lite window manufacture installed, at our home, defective windows which they agreed to replace after inspecting them. However, the replacements are also defective windows as per TAS -202. In addition to this, a Failed report from a Florida engineering firm, which is license in the State of Florida to administer the water/air infiltration test E1105 has gone completely ignored by the CAP Dept. Paradise did not refute it with their own engineer, the CAP Dept. simply ignored it.

The second complaint is against the local jurisdiction of the Town of Southwest Ranches CAP Dept., specifically against Mr. Brian Dillon, Building Official to the Town of Southwest Ranches CAP. Mr. Dillon was given the engineering report (See attachment # 2) that proved the window had failed the TAS-202 of the Florida Building Code. On February 17, 2021, Paradise Exterior, and a representative of Soft-Lite conducted only a visual inspection of the windows. At no time was there additional water infiltration testing by engineers to counter the failed report. Mr. Brian Dillon, of the Town of Southwest Ranches, passed and closed out the permit without any engineer report refuting the FAILED engineering report and without regard for the fact that the windows were still allowing water to enter the home. Mr. Dillion’s rationale was that he must pass the windows as having been installed correctly but he expressed that it should not be interpreted as the windows not having existing issues.

Later that day, unbeknownst to us, the regular field inspector was schedule and came out to do the final inspection. Mr. Mario Quinonez who has been the inspector on the job since day one. Mr. Quinonez failed the inspection again on February 17 and recorded it on the Town of Southwest Ranches permits web site. (See Attachment # 3).

Somehow, on March 4 2022, Mr. Quinonez’s failed inspection report was removed from the website and an approval was posted on the site, signed by Mr. Brian Dillon. I have been unable to see Mr. M. Quinones’s report online since then. Mr. Brian Dillon who has the failed report from the engineering firm, overruled 2 failed reports - the water infiltration test conducted by a qualified engineer and the Town’s own inspector report. Mr. Brain Dillon passed the final without ever inspecting the job.

Mr. Mandani I pray that your department will takes this matter seriously, investigate into it and correct what needs to be corrected. It frightens me to know that regardless of the requirements and codes in place for the protection of property and life, individuals meant to protect the public can chose to override the requirements placing lives in danger.

I would appreciate a visit from you, come out to our home and do a field visit.

I need peace of mind that during the next storm, our windows are

up to code in all aspects - manufacturing, installation and especially integrity in inspection

 I hope that this is the only case where this many issues have occurred but I sincerely doubt it to be true. What good is to have an inspection if the inspector’s boss can overrule building codes, or the inspection fails and nothing is done to correct the cause of failure, or an engineer report showing clearly that the windows are not water tight – is just ignored?

I greatly appreciate your time and knowledge as it applies to this matter, and I hope to hear from you soon.

Regards,

Silvia Lino