



Adam Foslid
333 S.E. 2nd Avenue
Miami, FL 33131

VIA OVERNIGHT DELIVERY

Secretary Ben Carson
United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
451 7th Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20410

CC:

Carlos Osegueda, Regional Director
Atlanta Regional Field Office
United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity
40 Marietta Street
Atlanta, GA 30303

March 6, 2018

Dear Secretary Carson:

Greenberg Traurig, P.A. and First Liberty Institute represent Mrs. Donna Dunbar in connection with this Fair Housing complaint, which is made pursuant to 42 U.S.C. § 3610(a)(1) and 24 C.F.R. § 103.10, against Cambridge House of Port Charlotte – a Condominium, Inc. (“Cambridge House”) and The Gateway Group, Inc. (“Gateway Group”). Please direct all future communications concerning this matter to my attention.

As explained below, Mrs. Dunbar and her husband own a unit in a condominium building located at 21260 Brinson Ave., Port Charlotte, Florida 33952. The condominium is governed by Cambridge House and managed by Gateway Group. Cambridge House directly and indirectly through its manager, Gateway Group, is restricting Mrs. Dunbar’s and other Christian residents’ equal use of the condominium’s common areas, which include a social room, a lobby lounge, and an outdoor courtyard, on the basis of religion in violation of 42 U.S.C. § 3604(b) and 24 C.F.R. § 100.65(b)(4), (7).

Mrs. Dunbar’s Bible Study

Mrs. Dunbar is a devout Christian and a lay minister in the Seventh Day Adventist Church. Her religious beliefs motivate her involvement in her local community. In recognition for this involvement and her volunteerism, Mrs. Dunbar received the President’s Volunteer Service Award from President Obama.

Mrs. Dunbar leads a small women’s Bible study, which, up until recently, would meet in the condominium social room for two hours on Monday mornings. The group consists of less

than ten friends, consisting of both Cambridge House residents and a few invited nonresident guests, from different churches. The group gathers to study the book *Experiencing God* by Henry T. Blackaby, pray together, sing songs, and share lunch.

Other residents also use the social room for regularly scheduled activities, including movie nights, game nights, and thrice-weekly two-hour card games. Notwithstanding the fact that these events are of a similar size and duration to Mrs. Dunbar's Bible study meetings and are also open to invited nonresident guests, the previous Cambridge House treasurer required Mrs. Dunbar to obtain insurance in order to continue her meetings, while not even suggesting that the other groups obtain insurance to continue using the social room for their meetings. While Mrs. Dunbar, under protest, complied and obtained that insurance coverage, such disparate treatment reveals the level of resistance Mrs. Dunbar's religious exercise faces at Cambridge House.

Cambridge House Passes a Discriminatory Resolution, Without Notice and in Violation Florida Law, Prohibiting Mrs. Dunbar from Continuing her Bible Study in any of the Condominium's Common Areas

During a meeting on February 6, 2018, Cambridge House, through its board, adopted a resolution (the "Cambridge House Resolution" or the "Resolution") further singling out Mrs. Dunbar's Bible study. Specifically, the Resolution states that "[p]rayers and other religious services, observations, or meetings of any nature shall not occur . . . in or upon any of the common elements." Importantly, the Cambridge House board did not include the proposed Resolution in the posted agenda, nor did the condominium owners receive prior notice of the proposed Resolution.

The board's failure to include the Cambridge House Resolution in the posted meeting agenda or otherwise notify the condominium owners of the proposed Resolution constitutes a violation of § 718.112(c)(1), Fla. Stat. More importantly, however, this lack of notice resulted in many interested condominium owners, including Mrs. Dunbar, not attending the meeting—at all or in its entirety—and having no opportunity to speak out against or oppose the proposed Resolution.

Following the board's vote, Gateway Group sent a letter to Mrs. Dunbar ordering her not to use the social room for her Bible study, forcing Mrs. Dunbar to either abandon her Bible study or crowd participants into the living room of her 919 square foot condominium. Gateway Group also sent all Cambridge House residents a letter informing them of the Resolution's adoption.

Cambridge House Purges Displays of Religion Pursuant to the Resolution

In days following the adoption of the Resolution, Gateway Group sent letters to Mrs. Dunbar's neighbors prompting them to remove decorative crosses from their doors, and it removed from the building's courtyard a decorative angel fountain and a statue of St. Francis of Assisi, which a resident donated in memory of a deceased family member. Around that same time, a sign declaring, "ANY AND ALL CHRISTIAN MUSIC IS BANNED!" was posted on the lobby lounge organ, which was donated by one of the residents and previously used to play

both secular and religious songs at bi-weekly group sing-alongs. A photograph of this sign, taken by Mrs. Dunbar's husband Clarence, is included below:



The Cambridge House Resolution is Discriminatory and Violates the Fair Housing Act

The Cambridge House Resolution, both in text and in application, is discriminatory and violates the Fair Housing Act because it prohibits Mrs. Dunbar and other Christian residents from accessing common condominium areas for any religious activity, while allowing other residents to use those same facilities for similar non-secular purposes. *See* 24 C.F.R. § 100.65(b)(4). In effect, the Resolution manifests profound hostility to Christians, and indeed all religious residents, and discriminates against any resident who wishes to express their faith beyond the walls of their private residence.

For example, the Resolution poses no obstacle to a group meeting in the social room to study a *secular* book, watch a *secular* movie, listen to *secular* music, or carry on an organized *secular* discussion, but it prohibits Mrs. Dunbar and other condominium residents from meeting in the social room to study a *religious* book, watch a *religious* program, listen to *religious* music, or even participate in a conversation about their *religious* faith. The Cambridge House Resolution is so broad that it even prohibits residents from unobtrusively praying silently—before a meal or otherwise—in one of the condominium's common areas.

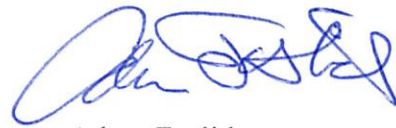
Conclusion and Request for Investigation

Since the enactment and implementation of the Cambridge House Resolution, Mrs. Dunbar has been forced to hold the women's Bible study in her ill-equipped condominium unit.

All the while, Cambridge House and Gateway Group continue to allow other condominium residents to use the social room to host thrice-weekly card games, group parties, and other events.

Simply put, this disparate treatment on the basis of religion is unlawful and is not supported by any legitimate, non-discriminatory justification. We therefore request that the Department of Housing and Urban Development investigate this matter and take all appropriate action. Please find enclosed a list of relevant mailing addresses, the letter Gateway sent to Mrs. Dunbar and a copy of the Cambridge House Resolution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Adam Foslid', with a stylized, cursive script.

Adam Foslid

[Enclosures]

Mailing Addresses

Mrs. Donna Dunbar



Cambridge House of Port Charlotte — a Condominium, Inc.

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 380758
Murdock, FL 33983

Physical Address:

21260 Brinson Ave.
Port Charlotte, FL 33952

Board of Directors:

Roy Slater, President and Director
Clarena Johnson, Vice President and Director
Jacqueline Simmons, Secretary and Director
George Foster, Treasurer and Director
Louis (Lou) Vanella, Director

The Gateway Group

Mailing Address:

P.O. Box 380758
Murdock, FL 33983

Physical Address:

1532 Rio De Janeiro Ave.
Punta Gorda, FL 33983

CAMBRIDGE HOUSE of PORT CHARLOTTE, A CONDOMINIUM

P.O. Box 380758 ~ Murdock, Florida 33938-0758

Office (941) 629-8190 ~ Fax (941) 629-0987

February 07, 2018

Clarence & Donna Dunbar


Dear Clarence & Donna Dunbar:

At the Board of Directors meeting on February 16, 2018 the attached resolution was adopted.

The result of this resolution prohibits Bible Study meetings in the Social Room effective February 16, 2017.

If you have any questions please speak with a Board Member call Gateway Management at the number listed above.

Sincerely,
Kristine Wishard, CAM
Gateway Management

**RESOLUTION ADOPTING RULE REGARDING RELIGIOUS
OBSERVANCES ON COMMON ELEMENTS**

CAMBRIDGE HOUSE OF PORT CHARLOTTE

WHEREAS, Article II, Section (1) of the Articles of Incorporation provides that the Association shall have all the powers and duties set forth in Chapters 617 and 718, Florida Statutes, except as they may be limited by the Declaration, as it may be amended from time to time, the Articles, as they may be amended from time to time, and the Bylaws, as they may be amended from time to time, and;

WHEREAS, Article II, Section (2) (f) of the Articles grants the Association the power to make and amend regulations respecting the use of the Condominium property, and;

WHEREAS, Article XI of the Bylaws provides that the Board of Directors may, from time to time, adopt rules and regulations governing the details of the operation and use of the common elements, and such other rules and regulations as are designed to prevent unreasonable interference with the use of the units, limited common elements and common elements by the members, and;

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors believes it to be in the best interest of the Association to adopt a rule regarding religious observances on the common elements.

NOW THEREFORE, the Board of Directors adopts the following Rule for the Association:

1. Prayers and other religious services, observations, or meetings of any nature shall not occur at meetings of the Association (Owner meetings, Member meetings, committee meetings, or, otherwise) and shall not occur in or upon any of the common elements.
2. The intent of the Association is that the Social Room and all Common Elements be used only upon proper approval of the Board of Directors.
3. The Rule shall be effective as of the date of adoption by the Board.
4. A copy of this Resolution will be provided to all unit owners.

This Resolution was adopted at a duly noticed meeting of the Board on the 6th day of July, 2018, and shall be considered effective as of that date.

CAMBRIDGE HOUSE OF PORT CHARLOTTE
CONDOMINIUM, INC.

BY: Roy Z. Slater

President Date: 2.6.18

(CORPORATE SEAL)