

## Sonja Stout

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**From:** Cory Johnston <cory@johnstondesign.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, July 27, 2025 1:46 PM  
**To:** Darwin McClary; Sonja Stout  
**Subject:** Construction at former Lumber Yard property  
**Attachments:** Lumberyard Orion Twp emails.pdf; Permit application information.pdf; LY-DDA Progress-Reports\_Apr-July2025 cj.pdf

Village Manager and Council – Village of Lake Orion  
Re: Construction at the former Lumber Yard property (215 S. Broadway)

Please forward to the Village Council members and treat as a public comment

As I am sure you are all aware, extensive work is being done on this property as anyone can see and as documented in the DDA Executive Director's monthly reports to the DDA Board. Based on my initial request in April for information from the Orion Township Building Official (attached), they first stated there was a permit for minor work, although they did not provide it or any other information requested. In response to a follow up FOIA request this month (also attached), they stated there are no permits, no information, and no architect or engineer, even though these are state and local requirements for work that has been going on for several months. The final response to date did provide the permit applications but stated there are NO PERMITS ISSUED and no architect or engineer. None of these responses completely agree with each other so it is difficult to know which one is correct, only that they all show that state and local requirements have not been met.

Based on the DDA Executive Director's reports, there has been major work going on for months with claimed oversight by the Building Official, even though there are no permits for the work and incomplete application information. This has obviously been allowed by the Village of Lake Orion since there is no record of proper and complete permit applications, permits, code compliance, and Planning Commission/Council approval. All of this while extensive structural and repair work is being done in plain sight and as documented in writing by the DDA Executive Director (attached) and accepted by the DDA Board.

The proposed use of this property is a change of use from the original in that the buildings were previously controlled access private storage, built to an unknown standard. They are now being proposed as a public market, public assembly, and commercial/retail. As such, they are subject to the Michigan Building Code and/or the Michigan Rehabilitation Code for Existing Buildings as a change in use. There is nothing in the information provided that shows these requirements are being met. The value of the work is listed as almost \$600,000 with additional work approved by the DDA at their July meeting. This is not minor by anyone's standards, a matter of public safety, an issue of how public funds are being used, and whether governing law is being followed by anyone.

You can decide what, if anything, you want to do with this information, but it seems obvious to me that the DDA Executive Director, the DDA, the Village of Lake Orion, and the Orion Township Building Official are ignoring state law and local requirements which will put the public and public dollar at risk.

Cory Johnston

Attachments: email correspondence with Orion Township  
Permit Application information from Orion Township

## DDA Lumberyard Progress Reports w/ annotations