

Susan and Mitch Golant
Somera Road
Bel Air, CA 90077

May 9, 2009

Karen and Guy Vidal
Design Vidal
2658 Griffith Park Blvd
Suite 830
Los Angeles, CA 90039

RE: EXTERIOR RE-DESIGN OF OUR HOME – Somera Road, Bel Air, CA

Dear Karen and Guy:

Having lived in this Bel Air home for 20 years, we had full knowledge of the house's many strengths and flaws. The views were exciting but were obstructed in many areas by dark shutters and imposing railings. The windows rattled, leaked, and let through drafts. The construction, while appropriate 30 years ago with lots of wood siding, wood decks and eaves, began to rot and posed a fire and safety hazard in our hillside environment. Our patio and cantilevered deck were crowded with plants, furniture, and a hot tub we no longer valued or used. We loved living here but began to feel irritated with how the house looked.

We challenged you to design a new façade and exterior that was eco-friendly, insulating, fire-proof, and also modern without being industrial or cold. As a testament to your creative and intuitive insight, before we even had a conversation, you walked in and said, "I see Zen Modern." This is exactly what we had in mind ourselves, but didn't know how to reach our goal or articulate it so simply. My husband is a health psychologist-researcher working with people with cancer for an international organization, and wanted the space to be a sanctuary. I am a writer with more than 30 books to my credit, and needed a sense of openness and space since I work at home at my desk much of the day.

The exciting part of the design was our collaboration. You and Guy were tireless in checking in and checking back as we refined the design elements. The introduction of Prodemas as an architectural feature solved many problems for us as it is waterproof, fire retardant, maintenance-free and beautiful. The subcontractors you recommended were artisans of the highest quality. They were scrupulous in their integrity. You also worked well with our contractor, decorator, and our landscape architect, all of whom you had many consultations with.

We were stunned as the construction neared completion when many neighbors and strangers stopped us on the street to tell us how "gorgeous" the house was. One architect who lives in the neighborhood said, "Since your house on a prominent corner and I drive by every day, I was wondering what design decisions you would make at each point. And each one was perfect for your house." This continues until today, almost 6 months after the major construction was completed. In particular we want to single out the design and construction of the gates. Our son-in-law is a San Francisco metal artist whom we hired to design and create the gates for us. You worked well with him, refining the design and architectural elements.

We had been thinking about what we wanted to do with our house for several years. You brought our vision to fruition in ways we could not have imagined. Our landscape architect, who has worked on many large municipal projects, called the house "sophisticated and elegant." We think that captures your work here perfectly.

We are grateful for your work.


Susan and Mitch Golant

