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LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF ARCHITECTURAL EXAMINERS 9625 FENWAY AVENUE, SUITE B BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70809-1592 (225) 925-4802

IN THE MATTER OF: ) CASE NO. 2023-28
)
SMITH ARD GROUP, LLC )
)
RESPONDENT )
)
)
)

CONSENT ORDER

The Louisiana State Board of Architectural Examiners [hereinafter the "Board"], by and through its Executive Director, pursuant to authorization by the Board, and Smith Ard Group, LLC, represented herein by its duly authorized manager and member, Larry W. Smith [hereinafter "Respondent"], hereby agree to the following:

At all times material hereto, Respondent was not licensed in the State of Louisiana as an architectural firm, however Respondent subsequently received its certificate of authority from the Board, number AF0962.

An investigation was opened based upon the Board's receipt of information which suggested that Respondent had practiced and/or offered to practice architecture in Louisiana prior to obtaining a certificate of authority from the Board. Respondent was registered by the Louisiana Secretary of State in 2016 as an LLC. From 2016 until June 23, 2023 when Respondent received its certificate of authority from the Board, Respondent practiced architecture in Louisiana without obtaining a certificate of authority from the Board, submitting at least eleven (11) projects to the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office for review and permitting from 2019 until June 23, 2023.

La. R.S. 37:145(A) provides that no person shall practice architecture in this state or use the title "architect," or any term derived therefrom, or display or use any title sign, advertisement, or other device to indicate that such person practices or



practice architecture, or renders architectural services, or is an architect, unless such person shall have secured from the board a certificate of registration and license. La. R.S. 37:153(A)(6) authorizes the Board to take disciplinary action against persons who violate La. R.S. 37:145(A) and La. R.S. 37:154(A), upon a finding of guilt following notice and hearing and a majority vote of its entire membership authorized to participate in the proceeding. La. R.S. 37:154(A) prohibits all persons, including firms, from practicing architecture in this state prior to obtaining from the Board a certificate of registration. La. R.S. 37:145(A), La. R.S. 37:153(A)(6), and La. R.S. 37:154(A) were in effect at all times material hereto.

It is undisputed that **(a)** Respondent was registered by the Louisiana Secretary of State in 2016 as an LLC and, from that point until June 23, 2023 when Respondent received its certificate of authority from the Board, Respondent practiced architecture in Louisiana without obtaining a certificate of authority from the Board, submitting at least eleven (11) projects to the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office for review and permitting from 2019 until June 23, 2023.

By letter dated October 10, 2023, the Committee gave notice to Respondent that it was considering the preferral of charges against it on the grounds that it may have violated La. R.S. 37:145(A), La. R.S. 37:153(A)(6), and La. R.S. 37:154(A) relative to practicing architecture in Louisiana prior to obtaining from the Board a certificate of authority.

Wishing to dispense with the need for further disciplinary action and to conclude the instant proceeding without further delay and expense, and for the purpose of this proceeding only, Respondent and the Board do hereby enter into this Consent Order, in which Respondent of his own free will consents to the issuance of a Consent Order by the Board, wherein Respondent agrees to **(a)** pay a fine of one thousand five hundred and no/100 (\$1,500.00) dollars, **(b)** pay administrative costs of three-hundred sixteen and 62/100 dollars (\$316.62), **(c)** publication of this Consent Order on the Board



website and a summary of this matter in the Board's official newsletter, *Louisiana Architect*, to read, "*Smith Ard Group, LLC (hereinafter 'Respondent'), an architectural firm (license #AF0962), was subject to disciplinary action by the Board for practicing architecture in Louisiana prior to obtaining from the Board a certificate of authority in violation of La. R.S. 37:145(A), La. R.S. 37:153(A)(6), and La. R.S. 37:154(A). An investigation was opened based upon the Board's receipt of information which suggested that Respondent had practiced and/or offered to practice architecture in Louisiana prior to obtaining a certificate of authority from the Board. Respondent was registered by the Louisiana Secretary of State in 2016 as an LLC. From 2016 until June 23, 2023 when Respondent received its certificate of authority from the Board, Respondent practiced architecture in Louisiana without obtaining a certificate of authority from the Board, submitting at least eleven (11) projects to the Louisiana State Fire Marshal's Office for review and permitting from 2019 until June 23, 2023. Respondent has entered into a Consent Order with the Board wherein it admitted to the referenced violations of the above laws and agreed to pay a fine of \$1,500; to pay administrative costs of \$316.62; to the publication of this Consent Order on the Board's website; to the printing of a summary of this matter in the official newsletter of the Board, Louisiana Architect, identifying Respondent by name, and to the reporting of this matter to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards ('NCARB') Disciplinary Database, identifying Respondent by name."*; and (f) to the reporting of this matter to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards ("NCARB") Disciplinary Database, identifying Respondent by name.

Respondent admits that its conduct as set forth above constitutes violations of the above-referenced laws and/or rules as stated herein. Respondent acknowledges that this Consent Order constitutes a disciplinary action by the Board against it and its Louisiana certificate of authority to practice architecture. Respondent also acknowledges awareness of said laws and/or rules and states that it will comply with all applicable laws and rules henceforth. Respondent has been advised of its right to be represented by counsel before the Board and/or to appear at any hearing personally or



by counsel and present witnesses and evidence on its own behalf; it hereby waives these rights and its right to appeal, and it states affirmatively that it has been afforded all administrative remedies due it under the law. Respondent further acknowledges awareness of the fact that the signed original of this Consent Order will remain in the custody of the Board as a public record and will be made available for public inspection and copying upon request.

Therefore, in consideration of the foregoing and by signing this Consent Order, Respondent does hereby waive its right to a hearing before the Board, to the presenting of evidence and witnesses on its behalf, to Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law in this case, and to judicial review of this Consent Order.

Respondent hereby represents that (a) it fully understands the meaning and intent of this Consent Order, including but not limited to its final and binding effect, (b) it has voluntarily entered into this Consent Order, and that no other promise or agreement of any kind has been made to or with it by any person whatsoever to cause the execution of this instrument, and (c) the sanctions set forth in this Consent Order do not prevent the Board from taking further disciplinary or enforcement action against Respondent on matters not specifically addressed in this Consent Order.

WHEREFORE, the Louisiana State Board of Architectural Examiners and Respondent agree that:

1. Respondent shall pay a fine of one thousand five hundred and no/100 (\$1,500.00) dollars, which shall be tendered to the Board by certified check payable to the Treasurer, State of Louisiana, due upon the signing of this Consent Order; and
2. Respondent shall pay administrative costs of pay administrative costs of three-hundred sixteen and 62/100 dollars (\$316.62), which shall be tendered to the Board by certified check payable to the Louisiana State Board of Architectural Examiners, due upon the signing of this Consent Order; and

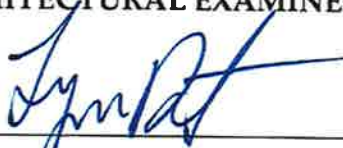


3. This Consent Order shall be published on the Board's website, and a summary of this matter shall be printed in the official newsletter of the Board, *Louisiana Architect*, and reported to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards ("NCARB") Disciplinary Database, all identifying Respondent by name; and

4. This Consent Order shall not become effective unless and until it is accepted and signed by and on behalf of the Board. Should the Board not accept and sign this Consent Order, it is agreed that presentation of this matter to the Board shall not prejudice the Board or any of its members, staff, attorneys, or representatives from further participation, consideration, or resolution of any further proceedings herein.

**LOUISIANA STATE BOARD OF  
ARCHITECTURAL EXAMINERS**

DATE: 12/1/2023

BY:   
TYSON J. DUCOTE, Executive Director

**SMITH ARD GROUP, LLC**

DATE: 10/30/2023

BY:   
Larry W. Smith

Witnesses to the signature of Larry W. Smith



Printed Name: Patricia R. Smith



Printed Name: Nelda S. Grimes

