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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. 2020-04
THE HILL FIRM, INC.)
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 The Hill Firm, Inc. [hereinafter “Respondent”], by and through its duly authorized undersigned representative, hereby agree to the following:

At all times material hereto, Respondent was not licensed or certified in the State of Louisiana as an architectural firm and, therefore, was not authorized to practice and/or offer to practice architecture in the State of Louisiana. At all times material hereto, Kevin A. Clauson was licensed in the State of Louisiana as an architect, number 8873. At all times material hereto, Clauson was an employee of Respondent. Clauson is now the supervising professional architect of Respondent.

Respondent subsequently became licensed in the State of Louisiana as an architectural firm, number AF0584, effective July 1, 2019.

An investigation was opened based upon the Board’s receipt of an Initial Application for Registration of an Architectural Firm in which Respondent admitted that it engaged in the unlicensed practice of and/or offering to practice architecture in Louisiana. The investigation disclosed that in or about February 2019 Clauson (on behalf of and in the name of Respondent) prepared and issued to its client architectural drawings in connection with the Insurance Auto Auctions Corp. in Carville, Louisiana. The investigation also disclosed that in or about in or about June 2019 Clauson (on behalf of and in the name of the Respondent) prepared, sealed, signed, and issued to its client architectural drawings in connection with the Briarwood Estates Duplexes in Winnfield, Louisiana.

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 offers to 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. 37:154(A) prohibits any person from practicing, or offering to practice, architecture in Louisiana without being certified. La. R.S. 37:154(A) 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 finding of guilt following notice and hearing and a majority vote of its entire membership authorized to participate in the proceeding. La. R.S. 37:145(A) and La. R.S. 37:154(A) were in effect at all times material hereto.

It is undisputed that between February 2019, and July 1, 2019, Respondent was not licensed or certified to practice and/or offer to practice architecture in Louisiana and that during this time period Respondent practiced and offered to practice architecture in Louisiana without proper licensure or certification.

By letter dated October 7, 2020, the Board gave notice to Respondent that it was considering the preferral of charges against Respondent on the grounds that it may have violated La. R.S. 37:145(A) and La. R.S. 37:154(A), relative to the practicing of and/or offering to practice architecture without proper licensure.

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 its 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 four hundred forty-eight and 85/100 (\$448.85) dollars, and **(c)** the publication of this Consent Order on the Board's website and a summary of this matter in the Board's official newsletter, *Louisiana Architect*, and the reporting of this matter to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), all 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 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 rights to be represented by counsel before the Board and/or to appear at any hearing personally or by counsel and present witnesses and evidence in 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 to 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 rights to a hearing before the Board, to the presenting of evidence and witnesses in 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 a 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 four hundred forty-eight and 85/100 (\$448.85) dollars, which shall be tendered to the Board by a 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 published in the official newsletter of the Board, *Louisiana Architect*, and reported to the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB), 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: 12/11/2020

BY: K E Hillegas
KATHERINE E. HILLEGAS, Executive Director

THE HILL FIRM, INC., Respondent

DATE: 10/20/2020

BY: [Signature]
KEVIN A. CLAUSON, President

Witnesses to the signature of
The Hill Firm, Inc.

[Signature]
Print Name: Erica Hill

[Signature]
Print Name: JAMES HILL