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He's low-profile no longer

Sunroad's reclusive owner speaks out

By **Jeff McDonald and David Hasemyer**
UNION-TRIBUNE STAFF WRITERS

July 8, 2007

Aaron Feldman spent most of the past three decades nurturing his company and steering clear of the public eye.

But when the La Jolla developer built a high-rise next to a busy airport despite warnings that it violated federal height limits by 20 feet, his carefully guarded reputation began to draw unwelcome attention.

And when Mayor Jerry Sanders last month finally ordered the top floors of the 12-story office tower in Kearny Mesa torn down – eight months after learning about the problem – more questions arose about the man in charge at Sunroad Enterprises.

Feldman, a Mexican citizen who is worth as much as half a billion dollars, worries that the good works and good will he says he tried to cultivate in his adopted country are being swept away by the controversy enveloping his empire.

His worst fear, Feldman said last week in his first media interview ever, is that the public will never recognize Sunroad for its award-winning golf course, its top-end commercial complexes dotting the San Diego cityscape, its corporate philanthropy or its many car dealerships.

“Our integrity and our reputation has to be intact,” said Feldman, seated at the business end of a conference table at his plush company headquarters. “We have been here for 30 years. We have done great things.”

Feldman, 64, agreed to be interviewed only under certain conditions.

He would not address questions outside the scope of his business. And he would not discuss his divorce, which is



HOWARD LIPIN / Union-Tribune
Besides Sunroad Enterprises, Aaron Feldman controls more than 20 companies and partnerships.

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Report due: Results of the city's investigation into how the permit for Sunroad Enterprises' 180-foot office tower in Kearny Mesa was approved are

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being fiercely litigated in San Diego Superior Court.

Feldman, who controls more than 20 companies and partnerships besides Sunroad Enterprises, blames the office-tower dispute entirely on the city and has filed a \$40 million lawsuit to recoup his losses.

He said he didn't understand the hazard notice the Federal Aviation Administration sent to Sunroad in April 2006, warning that the building was a hazard to planes landing in bad weather at Montgomery Field less than a mile away.

For guidance, Feldman said he and his team turned to City Hall.

"We were told to stay out of it, that the city and the FAA would work on this," he said.

Feldman refused to reveal which city officials advised him to proceed with construction, saying he was restricted by the litigation.

In the months following the initial hazard notice, Sunroad received similar warnings from the state Department of Transportation. But the construction – and the controversy – continued until just over two weeks ago, when Sanders issued his order that the building be lowered.

Feldman insisted that the city and FAA would have found a way to settle the dispute without altering the building if City Attorney Michael Aguirre had not sued Sunroad in December to get the building height reduced.

"The FAA is very accommodating to cities when these issues happen – especially once the buildings are already up," Feldman said.

"If the City Attorney's Office had not gotten involved, this would have been resolved in an ordinary way in an ordinary period of time."

Even though Feldman has a reputation for being a demanding boss, he said no one – not even the architects who assured him the building was exempt from FAA height limits – has been rebuked for violating federal standards. He has used the same firm, Brian Paul & Associates, since the 1980s.

Gilbert Cooke, a dean at the New School of Architecture and Design in San Diego, said any professional working on a high-rise within a mile of a general-aviation airport would surely have known about the FAA rules.

"The question is who gave the architects and engineers of record statements that this is acceptable?" Cooke said.

Feldman alternately blamed city and federal

expected to be released Tuesday. The building exceeds an FAA height limit by 20 feet. Ronne Froman, who recently resigned as San Diego's chief operating officer, conducted the review.

Re-engineering: Sunroad has said it will submit a design plan and timetable for lowering the building to city officials by Tuesday.



HOWARD LIPIN / Union-Tribune
Aaron Feldman's business formula involves deciding what he wants to accomplish and then surrounding himself with the best experts he can find to get it done.

Sunroad's business network

officials for the situation.

He said the structure is safe for pilots and tenants and doesn't need to be lowered, even though he will do so.

“These millions of dollars are going to be an absolute waste,” Feldman said. “If we prevail in court – and I think we will prevail in court – just think how many helicopters the city could buy with that money, how many police officers.”

■ ■ ■

Feldman was born into a wealthy family in Mexico City, where his parents had emigrated from Russia and Lithuania years before. He earned the equivalent of an economics degree from National Autonomous University of Mexico before launching his career.

He took a job with the family business, Grupo Feld, which operated the Siderurgica Tultitlan steel mill, and married 18-year-old Elena Romanowsky in a civil ceremony at his parents' home in 1969.

By the mid-1970s, Feldman began looking north to start his own business. He arrived in San Diego with millions of dollars in seed money from his family and set to work reviewing the business climate and hunting for potential partners.

Architect and former port commissioner Frank Hope Jr. remembers Feldman introducing himself in the late 1970s and pitching one project or another. But the longtime San Diegan resisted going into business with Feldman because he was relatively unknown.

“He had a lot of big things in mind, but nothing more,” Hope said. “He was a nice young man who was ready to start building his business.”

Feldman's first investments included condominiums and other residential properties. His right-hand man, Richard Vann, who had also migrated north from Mexico, told a reporter in 1981 that they focused on homes because of their cash-flow value.

They also developed office buildings in La Jolla and Mission Valley and began snapping up car dealerships in the mid-1980s. Later, Feldman developed a golf and country club in Poway.

When the San Diego Unified Port District sought to have a marina built on Harbor Island in the 1980s, Feldman wanted in. So did many others, however, and Feldman astutely realized he would not likely win the bidding sweepstakes without partners who had close relationships with the commission that would award the contract.

He approached Hope, who by then was off the port commission, his brother Charles Hope and Robert Collins, a trio of local investors with experience running marinas and connections with the people in charge.

This time, Frank Hope and the others bought in. With Feldman providing most of the upfront cash and Collins and the Hopes tapping their business ties and experience, the partners beat out 16 other bidders for what became the Sunroad Resort Marina.

“It was different,” Frank Hope said of the marina proposition by Feldman. “He was more substantial. He had established himself.”

■ ■ ■

Early on, Feldman developed a winning business formula that he applies to whatever enterprise he pursues. He decides what he wants to accomplish, then surrounds himself with the best experts he can find to get it done.

Sometimes, Feldman turns to the very people his staff deals with in local government. When Feldman was putting together the marina deal, he hired real estate expert Thomas Morgan away from the Port District. In 2005, he hired Tom Story, who had been a development-services official at City Hall for years.

Legal opponents and business competitors describe Feldman as headstrong and unapologetic.

“He's a bright guy and knows how to make a business successful,” said Stephen Cushman, a port commissioner who also owned a line of San Diego car dealerships. “Aaron has always employed very sharp people. And he lets them do their job, and they do a good job for him.”

About the same time Feldman was focused on building offices and stoking his car-sales business, he turned his hand to banking. He launched International Savings Bank in 1984 and began running his business accounts through the venture.

Like many of Feldman's companies, the bank grew aggressively, and within a few years, the four branches reported assets as high as \$350 million.

In 1994, however, the financial institution ran afoul of federal regulators. International Savings was cited for violating capital requirements, and eventually Feldman agreed to a takeover by Regency Savings Bank of Illinois. The terms were never disclosed.

Through the 1980s, Feldman's commercial interests boomed. He hosted lavish parties for San Diego's business and social elite and donated regularly to the campaigns

of local office-seekers – even though he cannot vote.

In 1989, Feldman bought a house on three prime acres along La Jolla Scenic Drive that belonged to another well-known developer, Harry Summers, who built the planned community of Rancho Bernardo.

He tore down Summers' house to develop his own dream home, a custom design featuring eight bedrooms and 10 bathrooms spread over 10,000 square feet of living space.

According to court records, Feldman spent \$17,000 on a special lighting system for his garden.

Feldman “didn't take San Diego by storm, but it was clear he was here with a long-term plan,” said Malin Burnham, one of San Diego's top business leaders, whose real estate company is handling leases for Feldman's disputed building.

“He did his business his way and without attracting a lot of notoriety. That was his way.”

■ ■ ■

Despite Feldman's deliberately low profile, his company has been in the news before.

In the 1980s, just after Feldman purchased his Ford dealership in Kearny Mesa, he and his company were included in a lawsuit filed by a career salesman who claimed that for years, he was systematically cheated out of commissions.

The plaintiff, Salvatore Ruscitti, eventually persuaded dozens of co-workers to join the litigation, which was certified as a class action.

Ruscitti, 58, was shot dead in the doorway of his Leucadia home by two hit men hired by the son of the dealership's former owners, who had been named in the lawsuit and stood to lose millions of dollars.

During the murder investigation, sheriff's detectives came across evidence that Sunroad Enterprises may have been involved in racketeering and money laundering, according to a federal report obtained by The San Diego Union-Tribune.

The detectives gave their findings to the local office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, which sought permission from supervisors in Washington, D.C., to open a formal racketeering probe.

"Although the information received to date was not determined to be sufficient to warrant FBI investigation, it did present ample details which indicate the possibility of criminal activity on the part of (redacted from FBI files) and persons associated with Sunroad Enterprises," the 1992 request stated.

Federal authorities in Washington refused to approve an investigation.

■ ■ ■

Feldman is the sole owner of Sunroad Holding Corp., an investment company with interests in real estate, sales and entertainment that includes Sunroad Enterprises and dozens of other assets. His two sons, Uri and Daniel, work as Sunroad executives.

Most of his companies and partnerships contain the word Sunroad, Feldman said, because he saw San Diego as the "road to the sun" back when he decided to establish his business here.

He has resisted following colleagues to more developer-friendly regions such as Phoenix and Las Vegas because of his commitment to San Diego, which he said has been very good to him.

"My word is my bond," Feldman said. "It's very important for us to continue to do business in that manner."

Sunroad is continuing with plans to build two more office towers on the Kearny Mesa site near Montgomery Field. They were supposed to be even taller than the building that has caused Feldman so much grief, but now Feldman said he will get FAA approval before the buildings go up.

He also plans to get federal approval for the 600-room hotel project the company is planning for Harbor Island. Early renderings of that proposal also exceeded federal height restrictions.

Sunroad has major holdings in Otay Mesa, where Feldman and three other developers were trying to get property rezoned so they could build more than 1,400 houses.

Until June 29, the developers had been paying a consultant to help update the San Diego community plan for the area. Mayor Sanders decided he no longer needed help from the builders and informed their consultant that the city would take over the planning effort.

Sunroad now expects to sell the part of its Otay Mesa property that falls within the boundaries of the city of San Diego. But the company still plans to develop 200 or more acres it owns nearby, just outside city limits.

■ ■ ■

Feldman is waging a legal fight unrelated to the Kearny Mesa office tower, one that could cost him even more than the price of reducing that building's profile.

His wife of 34 years filed for divorce in 2003, and the couple is engaged in a bitter dispute over his holdings.

According to court papers, Feldman deliberately withheld information from his wife and her attorney concerning the extent of his businesses and his net worth.

Two years into the case, Feldman was fined \$250,000 by the family court judge, who said: "Respondent's failure to disclose is intentional, trying to circumvent the process. 'Hide the ball,' 'go fish', 'you figure it out' is not acceptable and it is sanctionable conduct."

Several former business partners and litigants said Feldman has a history of disregarding rules.

"Aaron knew how to get what he wanted," said Collins, one of the original Sunroad Resort Marina partners, who won a \$2 million judgment against Feldman after the partnership fizzled. "With all Aaron has, he could be a nice guy, but he has to win at all costs and drive his opposition into the mud."

But Burnham, the real estate icon whose family business dates to the 1890s, said Feldman doesn't strike him as someone who arrogantly defies authority. Rather, he appears to be a diligent businessman, Burnham said.

"On the surface, it sounds like he's saying, 'Do it my way,'" Burnham said. "But stepping into the shoes of a developer, I see where he has to protect his interests and the interests of his company."

■ Staff researcher Denise Davidson and Mexico City correspondent Adrienne Bard contributed to this report. David Hasemyer: (619) 542-4583; david.hasemyer@uniontrib.com

By La Playa Heritage on 07/08/2007

<http://www.laplayaheritage.com/Documents/CITY%20OF%20SAN%20DIEGO/Sur>

Sunroad's well known Airport Land Use Lawyer, Barbara Lichman of Chevalier Allen & Lichman sent the Airport Authority a report in April 15, 2005 in which she said she represented Sunroad in the property holdings at Montgomery Field, Brown Field, and Lindbergh Field (SDIA).

<http://www.calairlaw.com/>

"Sunroad is also developing a mixed use project at Montgomery Field, all of which is located in Zone D, currently comprised of 600 multi-family units and one million square feet of commercial office space, in buildings ranging from 8 to 12 stories... Safety cannot be an issue under the March 2005 Draft ALUCP's own analysis, as Zone D encompasses an area far outside that where the bulk of accidents are likely to occur... The ALUC's Safety Analysis and Restriction Impinge on the Realm Governed by FAA. Each sponsor of a project that meets the reporting criteria outline in Part 77 is required to notify the FAA's Air Traffic Division in writing of the proposed project and must provide specific information regarding construction dates, building design, building heights, construction... and any other information required by the FAA. Upon receipt of a Notice of Proposed Construction the FAA Air Traffic Division will forward the proposal to other FAA Divisions for their independent review. Further, FAA's Flight Standards Division is charged with ensuring that flight safety is not compromised by the placement of any structure or activity in an area that is not deemed to be consistent with the safe operation of aircraft and the preservation of life and property on the ground. In short, if during its evaluation based on these many diverse local as well as Federal parameters that FAA determines that the project will impact the National Airspace System it will issue a Determination of Presumed Hazard."

[Report Abuse](#)

By La Playa Heritage on 07/08/2007

There is also the April 20, 2005 Kearny Mesa Planning Group Meeting Minutes where guest included Sunroad's Land Use Consultant - Steve Laub, and Sunroad's Architect of the firm of Brian Paul & Associates (BPA) Dan Munch.

<http://www.geocities.com/kearnymesapanninggroup/2005minutes>

"The Sunroad 12 story Office Building project for "Substantial Conformance Review" was postponed to a future meeting at the request of the applicant. This project will be presented at the next Land Use Subcommittee meeting on May 11th. The Montgomery Field "Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan" (ALUCP) was presented by Terry Price, representing the City of San Diego Airports Division. This again was an information only item. Mr. Price presented the ALUCP even though the City did not create this plan. The SDCRAA was not able to attend to present it. The ALUCP creates different use zones that take into consideration noise, overflights and accident potential so that underlying land uses are compatible with the airport. Included in specific areas are building restrictions, occupancy restrictions, uses and heights. The complete plan is available on the SDCRAA web page found at sdcaa.org."

Mr. Feldman says he is clueless and is suing the Citizens of San Diego for \$40 million for his own deceptive business practices. After the building is lowered and he still tries to sue us (the Citizens of San Diego), we will start a boycott of all Sunroad's car dealerships. We will ask potential customers in Kearny Mesa to shop for their new cars in National City or Carlsbad.

Report Abuse

By Sky173 on 07/08/2007

Business as usual at City Hall. If a developer can't do it legally, he just buys one of the puppets at Development Services.

Report Abuse

By Glenwood1959 on 07/08/2007

Oh my God, what a LIAR! Too bad he wasn't under oath for this interview. He CLEARLY articulates that the FAA would have made an accomodation.....we will just build it first and ask permission later.....and then he says he didn't understand the numerous notices he got from the state and the FAA? I call B-----t. Get this guy under oath and get him to say this, then prosocute him for perjury.

Report Abuse

By therock on 07/08/2007

go back to mexico you crook. havent you stung america for enough profits yet ?

Report Abuse

By JFJarrett on 07/08/2007

Why is it I feel I need a shower after reading about Mr. Feldman. Could it be he's about as honest as a snake? Like most of the corrupt and slimey "officials" running this city, it's all about the money! Closed door meetings, loopholes, midnight handshakes, and "private parties", these type of people spend millions to thwart the laws... the laws the rest of us "little people" must live by. Allow me to build a second story on my home without the proper permits and I'd have 17 city inspectors demanding it come down or else!

Mr. Feldman spent \$17,000 on an outdoor lighting system for his 10,000 sq. ft. La Jolla Scenic Drive home... for a couple bucks more he could erect a big shining light atop his illegally built Sunroad building to help guide the planes over it. Hell, why doesn't he just buy Montgomery Field...

The \$40 million dollar suit he's filed with the city of San Diego should just about cover the cost of removing the two floors he needs to remove from his new building... like everything here in San Diego, the taxpayers will end up footing the bill for his arrogance and non-compliance. Mr. Feldman has done NOTHING to help the average citizen living here in San Diego except to reach into MY pocket to help create HIS empire.

Report Abuse

By Christopher Hall on 07/08/2007

While the Sunroad business may be solvent and worth millions of dollars, its name is trash and their brand is in the sewer: the other day I was in a parking lot, I saw a stranger get out of their car which had a "Sunroad" license plate holder, I pointed this out which made this person gasp, chat up a storm about Sunroad, then they mentioned how their first act upon getting home was going to remove the holder! So now, people, we are going after the bad name of Manchester next. And we shall see to it the minion little local politicians who'd never been elected to anything ever before get their comeuppance too.

Report Abuse

By Birdie on 07/08/2007

City of San Diego -- Please put some smart attorneys on the Sunroad case so we don't get suckered into paying this guy for his too high, non-compliant illegal building. Incredibly wealthy Mexicans like these spend their \$\$ here while their own people can't get paid enough in their own country to keep their kids from starving.

Report Abuse

By BSD on 07/08/2007

If Feldman was poor and got caught robbing a bank he would be deported.....but he's not so he gets a hall pass...I think not! I agree with the posts above and say DEPORT HIM. If he tried to pull a "fast one" like this in Mexico he would be shot.

Report Abuse

By mrdavis on 07/08/2007

Why doesn't he go back to his homeland of Mexico and spread his goodwill there. I am sick of the Mexican developers coming to our country, flaunting our laws, and doing what they want. There are too many Mexican developers that have come to San Diego to rape this country. This is all too common! I know of other companies that do the same thing...Flaunt our laws...then plead ignorance. DEPORT THEM ALL!!

Report Abuse

By Dagobarbz on 07/08/2007

Surely Mr. Feldman would have no fears about occupying the top floor of the Sunroad building at the end of the runway?

I'd like to see him there, or back in Mexico where he belongs. Whoop de doo! Shopping centers and a golf course! Yeah, that really is some legacy, paving San Diego one plot at a time, and spraying what's left with chemicals to protect the turf.

Thanks a lot, Feldman. Why don't you do your bit for Tijuana and your fellow countrymen next? The government of mordida is just right for your type of shady dealings and ethics.

Report Abuse

By Ronin on 07/08/2007

Why is Senor Feldman in America??

Sorry cronies, except you Mr. Sanders.

Report Abuse

By LUCKY on 07/08/2007

MR. FELDMAN, YOU JUST SHOT YOURSELF ON THE FOOT!
WE DON'T NEED YOU IN SAN DIEGO. SO WHAT IF YOU BUILD CAR
DEALERSHIPS, GOLF COURSES, BUILDINGS, ETC, ETC, ETC, BLAH, BLAH,
BLAH, POOR ME! WHERE DOES IT SAY THAT AT LEAST YOU HAVE GIVING
BACK A PENNY TO THE COMMUNITY? THE ONLY MONEY YOU HAVE
DONATED IS TO THE POLITICIANS YOU BOUGHT OUT! AND SINCE YOU
"DID NOT UNDERSTAND" WHAT THE FAA SENT YOU, SUE YOUR ATTORNEYS,
ARQUITECTS AND ALL YOUR HELPERS THAT DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO READ
THE FAA LETTER EITHER.
NOW I SEE WHY MEXICO HAS SO MANY POOR PEOPLE, IS BECAUSE OF
PEOPLE LIKE YOU THAT NEVER GIVES ANYTHING WITHOUT GETTING A
REWARD BACK. I, FOR ONE, WILL BOYCOTT ALL YOUR BUSINESSES FROM
NOW ON! AND I HOPE YOUR WIFE SUCKS THE BLOOD OUT OF YOU.

Report Abuse

By A Critic on 07/08/2007

So, what next? Will his present wife end up getting whacked by some hired
hitmen to silence her pursuit of equitable divorce proceeds? What a pig this
guy is.

Report Abuse

By Bud_SD on 07/08/2007

I agree with many posts here. Why doesn't this guy go back to Mexico, his ailing home country, and do something for them. He's obviously got talent for making a buck.

"He said he didn't understand the hazard notice the Federal Aviation Administration sent to Sunroad in April 2006" Come on, you really expect us to buy this load of c-a-.

"The FAA is very accommodating to cities when these issues happen - especially once the buildings are already up," Feldman said." Yeah, and Sunroad was banking on that, it's why you skirted the law and finished the building even though there was an order to stop construction.

"If the City Attorney's Office had not gotten involved, this would have been resolved in an ordinary way in an ordinary period of time." Ordinary way = backroom deals with the mayor. Why are you bashing our city attorney for pressing a public safety issue that you and your company blatantly ignored?

"Feldman alternately blamed city and federal officials for the situation. He said the structure is safe for pilots and tenants and doesn't need to be lowered, even though he will do so." Blatant arrogance is why Sunroad is now in this position.

"These millions of dollars are going to be an absolute waste," Feldman said. "If we prevail in court - and I think we will prevail in court - just think how many helicopters the city could buy with that money, how many police officers." If you and your company would have followed the rules, there would have been no losers in this situation. You gambled and lost. It's sad that you bring issues of public safety up when you constructed an illegal building adjacent to an airport that placed the public in harm's way. Now you expect the people of San Diego to pay for your arrogance and lack of public safety concerns.

After reading this interview, I want to go take a shower. Now I know why he remained low key for so long. He really knows how to rub the wrong way.

Report Abuse

By rg131313 on 07/08/2007

Nice diversion..."and I think we will prevail in court - just think how many helicopters the city could buy with that money, how many police officers." You thought you could use your money to break the rules. You can "think" you will prevail in court, but I think you have been exposed to the daylight and any judge that tries your case will know the public will be watching VERY closely. If he had developed in Mexico that would have helped the economy there and provided jobs, thus increasing the positive growth of the country. You are a typical (unfortunately) businessman. You take and think nothing of the consequences, they do not matter to you, you think you are above the LAW. Bill Gates is another one, but he hides it better. Gates, after the amnesty bill was shot down stated that he would go to Canada now to allow his company to get workers from other countries. Bill, Why not use your money to help people in this country and learn the skills you are in need of? Why? Because Bill Gates would rather increase his already huge amount of wealth, instead of using it to benefit and retrain workers in "his own country." Greed period, end of story.

Report Abuse

By rg131313 on 07/08/2007

Forgot to add I will not contribute a dime to any of his businesses. And I can understand his building in the US instead of Mexico. The corruption there would have dipped heavily into his pockets. Paying the Policia for "protection" for his businesses, the drug cartels for their take in the profit, getting robbed by employees. Sure that sounds like a business model we want to copy in America...NOT.

Report Abuse

By questdocdal on 07/08/2007

Potential FBI investigations (probably paid someone off to avoid this), suspected money laundering, a potential racketeering charge and the statement that cities are usually "accomodating" when these things occur... this guy is a thug, a financially successful one but a thug all the way. I agree, BOYCOTT every business he has his dirty hands in and perhaps look into revoking his right to be/live/work in the U.S. A man intelligent enough to build an empire can't understand FAA regs! Pleeeeeease, enough with the criminals running the city of SD.

Report Abuse

By Bud_SD on 07/08/2007

"A man intelligent enough to build an empire can't understand FAA regs! Pleeeeeease, enough with the criminals running the city of SD." Yeah, that was a pretty stupid statement, even if it was true. Ignorance isn't an excuse.

Report Abuse

By aSDworker on 07/08/2007

Developers have run San Diego for many years. Their greed has permeated our local government, our local politic, and our economy. This is one of the reasons that San Diego, with one of the highest costs of living in the USA, has the lowest wages. When local workers struggle to have a voice, especially in labor unions, the local "developer culture" fights it with all of their resources. See the recent Gaylord debacle!

Most of San Diego's "types" of developer are "vultures" sucking the blood out of our community!

Report Abuse

By Bud_SD on 07/08/2007

"Most of San Diego's "types" of developer are "vultures" sucking the blood out of our community!" Agreed, and then you have the apologists that profess that the low-wage jobs crummy developers (like Gaylord) bring to town are what the economy needs.

Report Abuse

By rg131313 on 07/08/2007

aSDworker, The other reason is the illegal immigrant work force that is lowering the wages for Legal citizens.

Report Abuse

By tangodancer on 07/08/2007

he actually admits that they deliberately built the building too high figuring they would coerce the FAA into letting them keep it later. Too bad there is someone wanting to enforce those pesky laws the City and State have.

I read the article thinking I would probably come away with an insight and an empathy for the man but, like someone else said, all I want to do is take a cold shower to get the ick off my body.

Report Abuse

By 04harley on 07/08/2007

hmm.. someone from Mexico coming into our country and pushing the boundaries to the point of being illegal? I am not buying it... What works there, obviously works here too, huh? Why do we allow this to happen? Once again, money talks.

Report Abuse

By Bud_SD on 07/08/2007

I hope the 'report' on the 'investigation', to be released Tuesday, is truly that and not a whitewash of what has transpired. Certain people in the DSD should lose their jobs over this debacle. What happened to the transparency, accountability and ethics this mayor was supposed to implement? Sanders is like a goofy, grinning version of Dick Murphy. It's too bad the citizens of this city elected another corrupt buffoon into the mayor's office.

Report Abuse

By los on 07/08/2007

what a slimeball; typical developer who exploits the spineless politicians... this building wasn't supposed to go over 3 STORIES! let alone 160'. manchester is using the argument that b/c the original plan has already been accepted, that he doesn't have to submit a new Environmental Impact Report; using that same logic that the original plan governs, then this building should never have been built over 3 stories. i hope that we citizens of san diego stop voting down party lines and start voting for our civic interests: for the betterment of our quality of life as tax paying citizens. we pay a premium to live here so we should demand that our taxes and government work for us and hold all those that conspire for their own personal gain at our expense accountable...

Report Abuse

By PeterSD on 07/08/2007

Hopefully, Mayor Sanders knew what he was doing when he ordered that 20 feet be lopped off this guys building.

It would be a shame if, as Feldman said, he had assurances from the city that the FAA was no big deal, and that the city would work it out.

I would think that the city has some responsibility when issuing the permit, doesn't the city have to review the FAA notices as well, or is that squarely on Feldman?

I want Mayor Sanders to prevail on this one, but the issue of the city's responsibility in issuing the permit, in the first place, is compelling for me.

Report Abuse

By SDpaul on 07/08/2007

If you want to read a better profile of Mr. Feldman, go to:
<http://www.voiceofsandiego.org/articles/2007/07/08/government/699feldman070>

Looks like the voice scooped the U-T on this one, that story was published on Friday.

Report Abuse

By fmorgan on 07/08/2007

Any Navy pilots feel like buzzing his home..shouldn't be hard to spot with the lighting.

Report Abuse

By avictor on 07/08/2007

Sounds like Mr. Feldman got too big for his britches. Of course when you own half the city maybe one feels entitled. What a jerk. I wouldn't be surprised if this situation causes an investigation into his other dealings. I bet we'll hear a lot more about this pig. Sanders huffed and he puffed and he blew his building down.

Report Abuse

By John Galt on 07/08/2007

Hmm. With a name like that, obviously not Christian. Makes you wonder whom is exploiting whom?

Report Abuse

By BigDog on 07/08/2007

This is getting comical.

First the Voice writes a piece on Chief Lansdowne in late May highlighting his penchant for lying to the city council and in speeches, and the UT counters with a huge fluff piece above the fold on A1 the following Sunday.

Now the Voice writes an article on Feldman, and the following Sunday there is a huge fluff piece above the fold on A1 in the UT, only addressing (and toning down) the negative points made in the Voice article, and fluffing up everything else.

Good job UT! Way to keep the populace in line, er, I mean informed!

Report Abuse

By John Galt on 07/08/2007

"Good job UT! Way to keep the populace in line, er, I mean informed!"

You are so wrong. I believe everything this worthless tripe of a newspaper prints and I refuse to read those other biased newspapers like the New York Times and the Washington Post.

Report Abuse

By bubu46 on 07/08/2007

avictor...Mayor Sanders fought like hell to let Sunroad keep their building until it became obvious he couldn't win...please don't credit the mayor for forcing Sunroad into compliance...he are them!

[Report Abuse](#)

By John Galt on 07/08/2007

Why do you even bother responding to that internet troll "avictor"? That guy will say anything just to draw attention to himself.

NOTICE: AVICTOR IS AN INTERNET TROLL. DO NOT FEED THE TROLLS.

[Report Abuse](#)

By ChaseJeff on 07/08/2007

Thanks for the game of softball w/ Senor Feldman UT!!! I thought the AZ Republic in Phx was a politicians and developers best friend - nope - The UT is in an even cozier bed with the two groups.

[Report Abuse](#)

By avictor on 07/08/2007

republicans_are_losers - I am not a troll. I have 1 screen name avictor. I have been posting to this site for a very long time. I have only been mean to one person the entire time and they insisted on picking on me. Why would you say such a mean thing? Are you a troll?

I have also been posting long enough to know that you not only exhibit troll like behavior, in every other comment you make but also throw the Troll card around the most. Didn't you learn to never cry wolf? A fox smells his own hole first.

[Report Abuse](#)

By zarathustra on 07/08/2007

Feldman... doesn't sound like a Spanish name to me. I'd love to hear more background on the saga that led to the Mexican citizenship, yet living in America (??). Where did his parents come from?

For someone that is allegedly worried about his reputation, he sure doesn't act like it.

[Report Abuse](#)

By avictor on 07/08/2007

republicans_are_losers is making stuff up about me. He's trying to ruin the screen name I have always used because I hurt his feelings in another post. I was sticking up for someone else he was picking on, ironically. He is a bully.

By republicans_are_losers on 07/07/2007

"Oh Mr. Anti-John-Galt, big lawyer. Gee. What is your bar number? Please let me know so I can be impressed and notify the State Bar of California that you are engaging in providing faulty legal advice."

By avictor on 07/08/2007

republicans_are_losers - Not cool. This is an informal board in which people come to express their opinions, hopefully opening a dialog to learn from one another. Not get threatened. Say you're sorry and give a hug.

Report Abuse

By disgustedinsd on 07/08/2007

Some one should investigate the FAA and make sure they sent the notice in Spanish. My gosh! Poor little Feldman! He did not understand the warnings! He should not be penalized! The FAA did not send the notice to him in Spanish, so it is the FAA fault!

People! We have the power to shut these crooks down! Get the work out! Tell your friends, family and anyone who will listen to boycott Sunroad businesses. If someone on here has the ability to find out all of the businesses owned by Sunroad, please post them so we can stay clear of them.

Report Abuse

By disgustedinsd on 07/08/2007

oops typing to fast. Get the word out!

Report Abuse

By republicans_are_losers on 07/08/2007

"Aaron Feldman's business formula involves deciding what he wants to accomplish and then surrounding himself with the best experts he can find to get it done."

Did the U-T merely regurgitate Feldman's press release when it presented this tripe instead of engaging in solid journalism? How much is Bob Kittle being paid by Feldman to publish this article?

Report Abuse

By avictor on 07/08/2007

By John Galt on 07/08/2007

Why do you even bother responding to that internet troll "avictor"? That guy will say anything just to draw attention to himself.

NOTICE: AVICTOR IS AN INTERNET TROLL. DO NOT FEED THE TROLLS.

You do realize that republicans_are_losers made up that rumor most likely because I stuck up for you in another post? I think it was you he was bashing.

Report Abuse

By republicans_are_losers on 07/08/2007

"Some one should investigate the FAA and make sure they sent the notice in Spanish."

Or Hebrew.

Report Abuse

By John Galt on 07/08/2007

Thanks. I think.

Report Abuse

By avictor on 07/08/2007

MADERAS GOLF CLUB: This golf course on Old Coach Road in Poway includes a 10,000-square-foot Italian villa-style clubhouse with a pro shop, restaurant and private members' lounge. Land acquired: 1998. Assessed value: \$2.2 million.

Does this assessed value seem awfully low to anyone else?

Report Abuse

By republicans_are_losers on 07/08/2007

Now that we are friends -- yes. Yes it does.

Report Abuse

By avictor on 07/08/2007

Yeah, I'd like to use that guy's assessor, I could save a bundle on property tax.

Now that we are friends, you should take back calling me along with the other 4 posters I have no affiliation with a troll.

Report Abuse

By avictor on 07/08/2007

By that I mean on the dozen or so boards you posted the accusations.

Report Abuse

By republicans_are_losers on 07/08/2007

"you should take back calling me along with the other 4 posters I have no affiliation with a troll."

I take it back. In a moment of paranoia, I conflated you with ghoward79, heavy machinery and say noo 2 drugs. A review of your postings shows that your vernacular is more mature. I firmly believe that the other 3 are pretty much the same person. I appreciate the fact that you have no affiliation with a troll.

Report Abuse

By nsgh31 on 07/08/2007

Mexican citizen. Nuff said. The continued rape of the United States by Mexico.

Report Abuse

By ghoward79 on 07/08/2007

reps are winners:

You are a liar. I post under one name. You are just afraid of free thought and discussion. If you can't handle the channel change it.

Report Abuse

By Fairness on 07/08/2007

The veiled (and not so veiled) racism expressed in this thread is deeply disturbing. Mr. Feldman's Mexican nationality seems tangential to the discussion. His ethnicity seems even more irrelevant. Such posts are beneath the people who anonymously cast aspersions. I am doubtful any of the people participating in these kind of attacks would do so in polite company.

Report Abuse

By Dagobarbz on 07/09/2007

Yeah, Fairness.

No matter what ethnicity, any group has good people and scum like Feldman and certain of our city officials.

It must be true that scum always rises to the top. Apparently, that's where the money is...

Report Abuse

By blue man group on 07/09/2007

Even though the piece is quite soft, I'm glad that most of the readers are able to see through it. Here's my favorite part - "Our integrity and our reputation has to be intact," said Feldman - after which he says - He said he didn't understand the hazard notice the Federal Aviation Administration sent to Sunroad in April 2006. How stupid does the U-T and Feldman think we are to believe this load? If Mike Aguirre can't win this lawsuit-to-be in court, the villagers should rise up with torches and pitchforks and oust the monster for lack of a brain. (which should probably happen anyway)

Report Abuse

By ghadashel on 07/09/2007

This guy is a real piece of work:

"The FAA is very accommodating to cities when these issues happen - especially once the buildings are already up," Feldman said.

"If the City Attorney's Office had not gotten involved, this would have been resolved in an ordinary way in an ordinary period of time."

I guess he was hoping to get the building up in a hurry and then pressure the FAA to relax its requirements. Too bad for him Aguirre punched a hole in those plans.

What a jerk. Put this dim-wit out of business - revoke his license or whatever. That business mentality may pass in Mexico but in the US you have to follow the law like everyone else or pay the price, BUD!

Report Abuse

By myview on 07/09/2007

If they just wait long enough, the problem will take care of itself on some foggy, rainy day (if we ever get another one of those).....

Report Abuse

By Justice4all on 07/09/2007

If Jim Waring gave Sunroad/Feldman/Tom Story approval to build without express FAA and DOT consent (sounds like they actually had the opposite - warnings to NOT build to that height), shouldn't he immediately be fired?

I also like how Feldman says the FAA will work with the city and also says his longtime architects told him it would be "exempt." He blames everyone but himself. I would think an experienced developer would get all necessary and required approvals before construction. Now if it turns out that the city gave him the ok to continue with construction, the taxpayers will get stuck with the cost of lowering the building and possibly the loss of value for a shorter building.

Report Abuse

By myview on 07/09/2007

I moved our boat out of Sunroad after learning who owned it..
I don't want to make a rich Mexican any richer when there are marinas owned by Americans just down the road....

Report Abuse

By ghadashel on 07/09/2007

His statements to the effect the City said they'e "take care of the FAA" only lead credence to the fact he had someone (ie - Story) lobbying on his behalf.

If the city is to blame in this then yes, Waring and anyone else with knowledge of the deal would have to go.

Sanders' re-election would also be put in serious jeopardy even if he wasn't complicit in these shenanigans. He hired Waring and should have been on point instead of waiting for the building to be built before every saying word one.

Report Abuse

By ghadashel on 07/09/2007

And finally - although I tried not to let Mr. Feldman's nationality into it I did slip in my comment on following the law.

Although I certainly agree there are apples as bad or worse than our Mr. Feldman right here in the USA (Enron, etc.) - I honestly can't help feeling a certain increased outrage when a foreign national assumes he can get around the law's put in place for good reason.

I understand he's paying a LOT in taxes but unlike a politician I don't give passes for money. He knew the law and thought he could get his way by paying off/influencing/whatever the right officials.

That kind of arrogance is very unattractive in ANYONE.

Report Abuse

By NOBULL on 07/09/2007

did anybody check on the workers right to work on the airport building since this feldman has issues about following the law here in the usa, and since he hid finances from his wife, who should be his best friend, then how can you trust him ,and why should the public feel sorry for him????

Report Abuse

By BigDog on 07/09/2007

Nationality, ethnicity and religion don't matter to me. What matters is this quote:

"Early on, Feldman developed a winning business formula that he applies to whatever enterprise he pursues. He decides what he wants to accomplish, then surrounds himself with the best experts he can find to get it done."

That is the very definition of business in San Diego (especially for developers). The "experts" they surround themselves with are current and former politicians and staffers, like Sanders, Waring, Escobar-Eck, Tom Story, Thomas Morgan, etc. They buy the influence to corrupt the land use and development permitting processes to make their land more valuable than it was to the seller.

This has gone on so long, and is such an entrenched part of San Diego politics/development that people like Dumanis, Lansdowne and Sanders stand up at press conferences to declare that it is not a corruption of the political process.

Local judges are part of the same good old boys network, so how does it end?

Report Abuse

By deepsand on 07/09/2007

We owe him so very much for all he has done for san diego....NOT!...go home loser

Report Abuse

By Gorgor on 07/09/2007

Good thing they didn't bring up his divorce.

Report Abuse

By LUCKY on 07/09/2007

to avictor and everyone else.
The County's assessed value is always lower than your actual value. Look at your last tax bill and you'll find it. Property taxes are based on your purchased price plus a 2% assessment on your tax payment every year after your first property tax year. And the county only has ONE TAX ASSESSOR and that is Mr. Gregory J. Smith.

Report Abuse

By sd_zoom on 07/09/2007

Not going to buy my next Honda from him. For sure not going to service it there even though its more convenient.

[Report Abuse](#)

By rockstar1 on 07/09/2007

Excellent point Fairness. It's incredible to think that out of all the things people have to comment about they select his nationality. I wonder what the same people have to say about the executives from Enron, Adelphia, Arthur Andersen, etc? Not much probably, since there is no place to deport them.

[Report Abuse](#)

By sd_zoom on 07/09/2007

Oh and what a shock! A developer who skirts the rules. sadly this is sooooo par for the course

[Report Abuse](#)

By NOBULL on 07/09/2007

Question is, DOES THIS FELDMAN HAVE PAPERS HIMSELF TO LIVE HERE Since he claims to be a mexican citizen 1st? this is a issue since feldman brought it up 1st, as for other being europeon, we have doug manchester, he filed for bankruptcy during the buiLDING OF THE CONVENTION CENTER FOR A SUM OF 300 MILLION, SO NIETHER ARE TRUSTWORTHY

[Report Abuse](#)

By dontworry on 07/09/2007

So why does race have anything to do with anything? Don't be mad because a Mexican is making millions and your not. haha! racist jelous haters!

[Report Abuse](#)

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