

Deal reached in StarPoint case

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Apartment owner accused by tenants of violating rights agrees to give relocation fees.

June 14, 2008|By Jeremy Oberstein

“Perhaps the building wasn’t where it should be on some issues, but it was not very run-down,” said Lara Yeretsian, a defense attorney with the firm Geragos & Geragos. “Our clients want to make [the apartment] a better place to live for Glendale residents. They came here with the best of intentions. They want to get along with the community.”

Yeretsian said that the effort to settle the lawsuit was not an admission of guilt by StarPoint but an effort to put the issue behind them.

“Our clients are very happy with this result,” she said. “It’s best any time you can get the case dismissed.”

Former residents of the Valderas Drive complex decried the settlement, saying the amount agreed upon by StarPoint and the city was too low.

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“It’s a steal for them,” said Angelo Synodis, a former resident in the complex named in the lawsuit. “For \$30,000, they are making a fortune. This is a million-dollar company. It’s about money, but it’s not about money.”

Others wondered if the settlement fell short of federal housing guidelines per regulations outlines by the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

“StarPoint has offered to settle with people at an amount that is less than the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development] guidelines,” said former Valderas Drive resident Sharon DeFrank, who was not named in the criminal case after having received about \$38,000 in relocation costs. “The city has the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development] guidelines, but is willing to let StarPoint pay people less. I hate to think they are working together, but it’s hard not to.”

While the criminal case has been settled, the civil trial is slated to continue Aug. 15 in Glendale Superior Court.

Synodis and four others are named in the suit, which is set for 2 p.m. in Department 5.

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