

Jury sides with couple from Boring against contractor

Builder - The Weedmans of Boring are awarded \$300,000 in damages from a fraud case

Thursday, August 28, 2008

JEFF MANNING The Oregonian

A Multnomah County Circuit Court jury ruled unanimously Tuesday against controversial former Oregon City contractor Wade McGilvra, awarding \$300,000 in damages to a couple from Boring who accused McGilvra of fraud.

McGilvra was featured prominently in The Oregonian in a 2005 story about problem contractors and lax state enforcement of consumer protection statutes.

Customers and subcontractors filed more than 40 complaints against McGilvra over the years before the Oregon Construction Contractors Board revoked his contractors license in July 2005.

Roy and Kris Weedman paid nearly \$500,000 to McGilvra's former Pacific Cascade Homes to design and build a house that would also double as a commercial wedding and reception hall.

Upon completion in 2002, the couple was shocked to learn that county building officials would not approve the structure for commercial use because it did not comply with the commercial building code.

The Weedmans sued McGilvra and his company for fraud, negligence and breach of contract in 2005. The trial finally began last week.

McGilvra argued in court that he was instructed by the Weedmans to build a single-family home and that's what he did.

The Weedmans, who still live in the house, initially filed a complaint with the Construction Contractors Board, which dismissed the claim.

The agency licenses contractors and adjudicates customer complaints. It refused to renew McGilvra's contractor's license in part after angry customers took it upon themselves to organize and bring McGilvra's case to regulators' attention.

McGilvra attributed his courtroom loss in part to the negative publicity. "It's unfortunate that the jury saw it the way they saw it," McGilvra said. "I think obviously that the bad press certainly didn't help."

For the Weedmans, the verdict justified the expense of a three-year legal battle. "For me, this is the best money I ever spent in my life," Roy Weedman said. "This man has devastated so many families."

"It's not the money because we're not going get any money," Weedman added. "We may be able to get a lien on his house and garnish 25 percent of his wages. But our goal was to try and put a stop to him."

-- Jeff Manning; jmanning@news.oregonian.com