

May 19, 2023

Milton L. Williams Jr.
Chair
Conflicts of Interest Board
2 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Williams,

This letter serves to notify the Conflicts of Interest Board (“COIB” or “Board”) that, in accordance with COIB Rule 1-13(e), I hereby designate Sofia Zuberbühler-Yafar, in her official capacity as Program Director for Sustainable Infrastructure at the New York City Department of Design and Construction (“DDC”), to serve on the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure’s Envision Review Board (“ERB” or “the Envision Board”) for a period of three years. Ms. Zuberbühler-Yafar previously served on this Board with DDC’s approval in 2019.

Sofia Zuberbühler-Yafar is currently employed at DDC as the Program Director for the Sustainable Infrastructure Unit within the Infrastructure Division. This unit manages the design and construction for capital projects related to the City’s infrastructure needs. As Program Director, Ms. Zuberbühler-Yafar’s duties include supervising over thirty capital projects that are part of DDC’s green infrastructure portfolio, overseeing a team of project managers, and developing frameworks for integrating sustainable and resilient designs in City infrastructure projects. Ms. Zuberbühler-Yafar reports to Associate Commissioner How Sheen Pau.

The Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure (ISI) is a non-profit organization that promotes the development of efficient and sustainable infrastructure. In furtherance of its mission, ISI operates Envision, a ratings system for assessing an infrastructure project’s sustainability, resiliency and equity. Envision also provides a membership program, credentials professionals and offers continuing education courses. Through their Envision Board, a committee of infrastructure professionals, Envision reviews design professional’s questions and makes updates to their sustainability ratings framework. The Board does not award certifications or ratings on specific projects; rather, an independent third-party verifies and awards infrastructure projects.

Based on Ms. Zuberbühler-Yafar’s work within the Sustainable Infrastructure Unit and the nature of her responsibilities at DDC, the President of ISI, Anthony Kane recommended Ms. Zuberbühler-Yafar for an additional 3-year term on the Board. Envision Board. Members include infrastructure professionals, such as engineers and program managers who represent public agencies, private companies, and general interest groups. The Envision Board provides unique opportunities to network with other infrastructure professionals, connections that empower careers, expands professional reach, and promote high standards of scholarship and practice.

There is a clear demonstrated nexus between the DDC’s goal of designing and constructing sustainable infrastructure and the work of the Envision Board, such that Ms. Zuberbühler-Yafar’s continued involvement

with the Envision Board will further the purposes and interests of the City. Ms. Zuberbühler-Yafar's membership additionally supports her work at DDC which includes leading ISI workshops for DDC Infrastructure employees.

Ms. Zuberbuhler-Yafar will not receive any compensation from ISI but will be reimbursed by ISI for travel expenses for the one annual in-person meeting. The remaining three meetings are held virtually and occur during her DDC work hours. Ms. Zuberbuhler-Yafar's does not anticipate utilizing City resources to attend these meetings aside from minimal computer equipment use.

I have been advised that Ms. Zuberbuhler-Yafar does not foresee any conflicts between her day-to-day responsibilities at DDC and her involvement with ISI. I am supportive of her serving in this role, subject to any required stipulations and/or recusals on her part. I am also requesting that Ms. Zuberbuhler-Yafar be allowed the reasonable and incidental use of City time, equipment, supplies and resources for her Envision Board participation as part of her City duties.

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated. Please do not hesitate to contact me or Senior Counsel John Lee who can be reached at (718) 391-1187.

Sincerely,

David J. Varoli
Deputy Commissioner of Legal Affairs & General Counsel