

- Department of Building Official

# QC vows to lift order stopping MRT-7 work

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The Quezon City local government vowed to lift the order that halted the construction of an MRT line 7 (MRT-7) station situated above the Quezon City Memorial Circle.

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According to Atty. Mark Dale Perral, head of the Department Building official of Quezon City, the Department of Transportation (DoTr) and concessionaire San Miguel Corporation (SMC) will meet this Friday, 28 February for the presentation of the pro-posed redesigned station that would address the concerns of the city government.

“We will analyze this on Friday, and rest assured, Mr. Chair, that in cooperation with the (DoTr) and (SMC) that we will immediately lift the order...” Perral said during yesterday’s hearing of the House Committee on Transportation.

During the hearing, the official clarified that the city government did not impose complete stoppage of the project as it recognizes it is part of the administration's "Build, Build, Build" program.

"I would just like to make a clarification as regards the cease and desist order. It is pursuant to Section 207 of the Building Code. However, under such provision, it will be a complete stoppage," Perral explained.

Based on the project's permit and clearance, the contractor indicated 4,997 square meters as its floor area. However, the present proposed floor area is more than five times the approved area.

"In this case we did not exercise that because the Quezon City government recognizes the importance of this project as part of the 'Build, Build, Build' program of the President," he added.

last week, Quezon City ordered a temporary cease and desist order against the on going construction of station 2 of the MRT-7 after environmentalists and historians expressed their concerns that the construction would affect the identity of the landmark as a national heritage park.

It also ordered a review of the project after discovering that the construction exceeded the previously agreed upon area.

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During the hearing, DoTr Undersecretary Timothy Batan explained that there were indeed changes made on the initial plan for the MRT-7 Station 2 to meet projected ridership.

"The unsolicited proposal was signed in 2002, (the) concession agreement with San Miguel was signed 2008 and we needed to update capacity and design of the system between 2017 to 2018," Batan said

He admitted there is cost implication as to the redesign, but he failed to disclose the increase in the project cost, since they are now in the process of determining this.

"We absolutely agree that there is a cost to delaying projects. Unfortunately, there has been a huge delay to the MRT-7," he added.

The DoTr official said, aside from the fact that they need sufficient space for projected passengers, they also consider concerns of concessionaire.

"on the one hand, we need sufficient space to meet the volume of passengers, which is projected to have risen compared to 2002 to 2008," Batan said.