

CBE v. City of Oakland/Aaron Metals

Aaron Metals is a metal recycling facility in the Stonehurst neighborhood in East Oakland. CBE and community members reported that the facility was causing terrible impacts on the community, including traffic, air pollution, noise and crime.

Aaron Metals had the City's permission to operate on less than 10,000 square feet. Over the past decades, however, it expanded illegally, so that its business now occupies 100,000 square feet and shares a fenceline with homes and in close proximity to several schools.

In response to persistent community activism the City demanded that Aaron Metals apply for a conditional use permit to operate on the full 100,000 square feet it was illegally using. However, the City approved the permit without ever considering the environmental impacts from operating a 100,000 square foot facility next to homes and schools. Because the City issued the permit without any review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), CBE filed a lawsuit in November 2008, asking Alameda Superior Court to reject the City's reliance on a CEQA exemption and require full environmental review and mitigation for the massive expansion. This case concluded in May 2009.