

Assembly Bill No. 1317

CHAPTER 1101

An act to amend Sections 1354 , 1363.05, and 1367 of, and to add Section 1366.3 to, the Civil Code, relating to common interest developments.

[Approved by Governor September 29, 1996. Filed
with Secretary of State September 30, 1996.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1317, Speier. Common interest developments.

The existing Davis-Stirling Common Interest Development Act provides that any member of the managing association of a common interest development may attend meetings of the board of directors of the association, except when the board adjourns to executive session, as specified.

This bill would require the board of directors to permit any member of the association to speak at any meeting of the association or the board of directors, except for meetings of the board held in executive session, as provided.

Existing law generally requires that, before a common interest development association or the owner of a separate interest therein brings an action solely for declaratory relief or injunctive relief, or for declaratory relief or injunctive relief in conjunction with a claim for monetary damages, except association assessments, not to exceed \$5,000, relating to the enforcement of the governing documents of the common interest development, the association or owner shall endeavor to submit the matter to alternative dispute resolution, as specified.

This bill would provide that the above specified exception for disputes relating to assessments is not applicable if in a dispute between the owner of a separate interest and the association regarding the assessments imposed by the association, the owner of the separate interest chooses to pay specified charges to the association and mail a written notice that the amount is paid under protest, as provided; and in these instances, the association would be required to inform the owner of his or her right to resolve the dispute through alternative dispute resolution as described above, civil action, and any other procedure to resolve the dispute that may be available through the association.

Under existing law, a regular or special assessment and any late charges, reasonable costs of collection, and interest, as provided, is a debt of the owner of the separate interest in a common interest development at the time the sum is levied. The sum is also a lien on

the owner's interest from and after the time the association causes to be recorded with the county recorder a notice of delinquent assessment, which is required to include a description of the owner's interest in the common interest development and other specified information.

This bill would impose additional requirements with respect to the collection of debts based on assessments of owners by a common interest development, as specified. The bill would require a notice of delinquent assessment to include a legal description of the owner's interest in the common interest development, and to be mailed to all record owners of the owner's interest in the common interest development, as provided. The bill would provide that a monetary penalty imposed by the association as a means of reimbursing the association for costs incurred in the repair of damage for which the member or the member's guests or tenants were responsible may become a lien against the member's separate interest enforceable by the sale of the interest under provisions relating to foreclosure, as specified. The bill would make related changes.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 1354 of the Civil Code is amended to read:

1354. (a) The covenants and restrictions in the declaration shall be enforceable equitable servitudes, unless unreasonable, and shall inure to the benefit of and bind all owners of separate interests in the development. Unless the declaration states otherwise, these servitudes may be enforced by any owner of a separate interest or by the association, or by both.

(b) Unless the applicable time limitation for commencing the action would run within 120 days, prior to the filing of a civil action by either an association or an owner or a member of a common interest development solely for declaratory relief or injunctive relief, or for declaratory relief or injunctive relief in conjunction with a claim for monetary damages, other than association assessments, not in excess of five thousand dollars (\$5,000), related to the enforcement of the governing documents, the parties shall endeavor, as provided in this subdivision, to submit their dispute to a form of alternative dispute resolution such as mediation or arbitration. The form of alternative dispute resolution chosen may be binding or nonbinding at the option of the parties. Any party to such a dispute may initiate this process by serving on another party to the dispute a Request for Resolution. The Request for Resolution shall include (1) a brief description of the dispute between the parties, (2) a request for alternative dispute resolution, and (3) a notice that the party receiving the Request for Resolution is required to respond thereto within 30 days of receipt or it will be deemed rejected. Service of the Request for Resolution shall be in the same manner as prescribed for



service in a small claims action as provided in Section 116.340 of the Code of Civil Procedure. Parties receiving a Request for Resolution shall have 30 days following service of the Request for Resolution to accept or reject alternative dispute resolution and, if not accepted within the 30-day period by a party, shall be deemed rejected by that party. If alternative dispute resolution is accepted by the party upon whom the Request for Resolution is served, the alternative dispute resolution shall be completed within 90 days of receipt of the acceptance by the party initiating the Request for Resolution, unless extended by written stipulation signed by both parties. The costs of the alternative dispute resolution shall be borne by the parties.

(c) At the time of filing a civil action by either an association or an owner or a member of a common interest development solely for declaratory relief or injunctive relief, or for declaratory relief or injunctive relief in conjunction with a claim for monetary damages not in excess of five thousand dollars (\$5,000), related to the enforcement of the governing documents, the party filing the action shall file with the complaint a certificate stating that alternative dispute resolution has been completed in compliance with subdivision (b). The failure to file a certificate as required by subdivision (b) shall be grounds for a demurrer pursuant to Section 430.10 of the Code of Civil Procedure or a motion to strike pursuant to Section 435 of the Code of Civil Procedure unless the filing party certifies in writing that one of the other parties to the dispute refused alternative dispute resolution prior to the filing of the complaint, that preliminary or temporary injunctive relief is necessary, or that alternative dispute resolution is not required by subdivision (b), because the limitation period for bringing the action would have run within the 120-day period next following the filing of the action, or the court finds that dismissal of the action for failure to comply with subdivision (b) would result in substantial prejudice to one of the parties.

(d) Once a civil action specified in subdivision (a) to enforce the governing documents has been filed by either an association or an owner or member of a common interest development, upon written stipulation of the parties the matter may be referred to alternative dispute resolution and stayed. The costs of the alternative dispute resolution shall be borne by the parties. During this referral, the action shall not be subject to the rules implementing subdivision (c) of Section 68603 of the Government Code.

(e) The requirements of subdivisions (b) and (c) shall not apply to the filing of a cross-complaint.

(f) In any action specified in subdivision (a) to enforce the governing documents, the prevailing party shall be awarded reasonable attorney's fees and costs. Upon motion by any party for attorney's fees and costs to be awarded to the prevailing party in these actions, the court, in determining the amount of the award,



may consider a party's refusal to participate in alternative dispute resolution prior to the filing of the action.

(g) Unless consented to by both parties to alternative dispute resolution that is initiated by a Request for Resolution under subdivision (b), evidence of anything said or of admissions made in the course of the alternative dispute resolution process shall not be admissible in evidence, and testimony or disclosure of such a statement or admission may not be compelled, in any civil action in which, pursuant to law, testimony can be compelled to be given.

(h) Unless consented to by both parties to alternative dispute resolution that is initiated by a Request for Resolution under subdivision (b), documents prepared for the purpose or in the course of, or pursuant to, the alternative dispute resolution shall not be admissible in evidence, and disclosure of these documents may not be compelled, in any civil action in which, pursuant to law, testimony can be compelled to be given.

(i) Members of the association shall annually be provided a summary of the provisions of this section, which specifically references this section. The summary shall include the following language:

“Failure by any member of the association to comply with the prefiling requirements of Section 1354 of the Civil Code may result in the loss of your rights to sue the association or another member of the association regarding enforcement of the governing documents.”

The summary shall be provided either at the time the pro forma budget required by Section 1365 is distributed or in the manner specified in Section 5016 of the Corporations Code.

(j) Any Request for Resolution sent to the owner of a separate interest pursuant to subdivision (b) shall include a copy of this section.

SEC. 2. Section 1363.05 of the Civil Code is amended to read:

1363.05. (a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the Common Interest Development Open Meeting Act.

(b) Any member of the association may attend meetings of the board of directors of the association, except when the board adjourns to executive session to consider litigation, matters relating to the formation of contracts with third parties, member discipline, or personnel matters. The board of directors of the association shall meet in executive session, if requested by a member who may be subject to a fine, penalty, or other form of discipline, and the member shall be entitled to attend the executive session.

(c) Any matter discussed in executive session shall be generally noted in the minutes of the board of directors.

(d) The minutes, minutes proposed for adoption that are marked to indicate draft status, or a summary of the minutes, of any meeting of the board of directors of an association, other than an executive session, shall be available to members within 30 days of the meeting.



The minutes, proposed minutes, or summary minutes shall be distributed to any member of the association upon request and upon reimbursement of the association's costs for making that distribution.

(e) Members of the association shall be notified in writing at the time that the pro forma budget required in Section 1365 is distributed, or at the time of any general mailing to the entire membership of the association, of their right to have copies of the minutes of meetings of the board of directors, and how and where those minutes may be obtained.

(f) As used in this section, "meeting" includes any congregation of a majority of the members of the board at the same time and place to hear, discuss, or deliberate upon any item of business scheduled to be heard by the board, except those matters that may be discussed in executive session.

(g) Unless the time and place of meeting is fixed by the bylaws, or unless by bylaws provide for a longer period of notice, members shall be given notice of the time and place of a meeting as defined in subdivision (f), except for an emergency meeting, at least four days prior to the meeting. Notice may be given by posting the notice in a prominent place or places within the common area, by mail or delivery of the notice to each unit in the development, or by newsletter or similar means of communication.

(h) An emergency meeting of the board may be called by the president of the association, or by any two members of the governing body other than the president, if there are circumstances that could not have been reasonably foreseen which require immediate attention and possible action by the board, and which of necessity make it impracticable to provide notice as required by this section.

(i) The board of directors of the association shall permit any member of the association to speak at any meeting of the association or the board of directors, except for meetings of the board held in executive session. A reasonable time limit for all members of the association to speak to the board of directors or before a meeting of the association shall be established by the board of directors.

SEC. 3. Section 1366.3 is added to the Civil Code, to read:

1366.3. (a) The exception for disputes related to association assessments in subdivision (b) of Section 1354 shall not apply if, in a dispute between the owner of a separate interest and the association regarding the assessments imposed by the association, the owner of the separate interest chooses to pay in full to the association all of the charges listed in paragraphs (1) to (4), inclusive, and states by written notice that the amount is paid under protest, and the written notice is mailed by certified mail not more than 30 days from the recording of a notice of delinquent assessment in accordance with Section 1367; and in those instances, the association shall inform the owner that the owner may resolve the dispute through alternative dispute resolution as set forth in Section 1354, civil action, and any



other procedures to resolve the dispute that may be available through the association.

(1) The amount of the assessment in dispute.

(2) Late charges.

(3) Interest.

(4) All fees and costs associated with the preparation and filing of a notice of delinquent assessment, including all mailing costs, and including attorney's fees not to exceed four hundred twenty-five dollars (\$425).

(b) The right of any owner of a separate interest to utilize alternative dispute resolution under this section may not be exercised more than two times in any single calendar year, and not more than three times within any five calendar years. Nothing within this section shall preclude any owner of a separate interest and the association, upon mutual agreement, from entering into alternative dispute resolution for a number of times in excess of the limits set forth in this section. The owner of a separate interest may request and be awarded through alternative dispute resolution reasonable interest to be paid by the association on the total amount paid under paragraphs (1) to (4), inclusive, of subdivision (a), if it is determined through alternative dispute resolution that the assessment levied by the association was not correctly levied.

SEC. 4. Section 1367 of the Civil Code is amended to read:

1367. (a) A regular or special assessment and any late charges, reasonable costs of collection, and interest, as assessed in accordance with Section 1366, shall be a debt of the owner of the separate interest at the time the assessment or other sums are levied. Before an association may place a lien upon the separate interest of an owner to collect a debt which is past due under this subdivision, the association shall notify the owner in writing by certified mail of the fee and penalty procedures of the association, provide an itemized statement of the charges owed by the owner, including items on the statement which indicate the principal owed, any late charges and the method of calculation, any attorney's fees, and the collection practices used by the association, including the right of the association to the reasonable costs of collection. In addition, any payments toward such a debt shall first be applied to the principal owed, and only after the principal owed is paid in full shall such payments be applied to interest or collection expenses.

(b) The amount of the assessment, plus any costs of collection, late charges, and interest assessed in accordance with Section 1366, shall be a lien on the owner's interest in the common interest development from and after the time the association causes to be recorded with the county recorder of the county in which the separate interest is located, a notice of delinquent assessment, which shall state the amount of the assessment and other sums imposed in accordance with Section 1366, a legal description of the owner's



interest in the common interest development against which the assessment and other sums are levied, the name of the record owner of the owner's interest in the common interest development against which the lien is imposed, and, in order for the lien to be enforced by nonjudicial foreclosure as provided in subdivision (d) the name and address of the trustee authorized by the association to enforce the lien by sale. The notice of delinquent assessment shall be signed by the person designated in the declaration or by the association for that purpose, or if no one is designated, by the president of the association, and mailed in the manner set forth in Section 2924b, to all record owners of the owner's interest in the common interest development no later than 10 calendar days after recordation. Upon payment of the sums specified in the notice of delinquent assessment, the association shall cause to be recorded a further notice stating the satisfaction and release of the lien thereof. A monetary penalty imposed by the association as a means of reimbursing the association for costs incurred by the association in the repair of damage to common areas and facilities for which the member or the member's guests or tenants were responsible may become a lien against the member's separate interest enforceable by the sale of the interest under Sections 2924, 2924b, and 2924c, provided the authority to impose a lien is set forth in the governing documents. It is the intent of the Legislature not to contravene Section 2792.26 of Title 10 of the California Code of Regulations, as that section appeared on January 1, 1996, for associations of subdivisions that are being sold under authority of a subdivision public report, pursuant to Part 2 (commencing with Section 11000) of Division 4 of the Business and Professions Code.

(c) Except as indicated in subdivision (b), a monetary penalty imposed by the association as a disciplinary measure for failure of a member to comply with the governing instruments, except for the late payments, may not be characterized nor treated in the governing instruments as an assessment which may become a lien against the member's subdivision interest enforceable by the sale of the interest under Sections 2924, 2924b, and 2924c.

(d) A lien created pursuant to subdivision (b) shall be prior to all other liens recorded subsequent to the notice of assessment, except that the declaration may provide for the subordination thereof to any other liens and encumbrances.

(e) After the expiration of 30 days following the recording of a lien created pursuant to subdivision (b), the lien may be enforced in any manner permitted by law, including sale by the court, sale by the trustee designated in the notice of delinquent assessment, or sale by a trustee substituted pursuant to Section 2934a. Any sale by the trustee shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Sections 2924, 2924b, and 2924c applicable to the exercise of powers of sale in mortgages and deeds of trusts.



(f) Nothing in this section or in subdivision (a) of Section 726 of the Code of Civil Procedure prohibits actions against the owner of a separate interest to recover sums for which a lien is created pursuant to this section or prohibits an association from taking a deed in lieu of foreclosure.

(g) This section only applies to liens recorded on or after January 1, 1986.

