

****Title:**** Aneco Realty and Development Corporation vs. Landex Development Corporation

****Facts:****

Fernandez Hermanos Development, Inc. (FHDI), initially owned a tract of land in San Francisco Del Monte, Quezon City, subdivided into 39 lots. FHDI sold 22 of these lots to Aneco Realty and Development Corporation (Aneco) and the remaining 17 to Landex Development Corporation (Landex). Conflict arose when Landex began constructing a concrete wall on one of its lots. Aneco filed a complaint for injunction with the Regional Trial Court (RTC) in Quezon City to halt the construction, submitting two supplemental complaints requesting the demolition of the wall and damages amounting to two million pesos. Landex defended its actions by asserting that Aneco's access to its lots was not impeded, referencing multiple entries Aneco had besides the disputed path.

The procedural journey saw the case progress from the RTC, which initially ruled in favor of Aneco, then reversed its decision upon Landex's motion for reconsideration—a motion initially defective for lack of notice but later set for hearing, giving Aneco the opportunity to respond. Aneco then appealed to the Court of Appeals (CA), which upheld the RTC's dismissal of Aneco's injunction complaint. Aneco proceeded to elevate the matter to the Supreme Court via a petition for review on certiorari, contesting the CA's decision.

****Issues:****

1. Should the Supreme Court strictly apply procedural rules pertaining to the notice of hearing for Landex's motion for reconsideration?
2. Does Aneco possess a legal right to prevent Landex from constructing a wall on its property under the circumstances presented?

****Court's Decision:****

The Supreme Court denied the petition, affirming the CA's decision to dismiss Aneco's appeal for injunction against Landex. The Court addressed:

- ****Procedural Issue:**** The Supreme Court highlighted the balance between strict and liberal application of procedural rules, siding with liberal application in this case. It ruled that the substantial compliance and procedural due process were met when the RTC, despite the initial procedural defect in Landex's motion for reconsideration, allowed Aneco an opportunity to oppose the motion.
- ****Substantive Issue:**** On the substantive question, the Court found that Aneco failed to show a clear legal right to restrain Landex from constructing the wall. It emphasized the rightful exercise of property ownership by Landex, including the right to fence its land,

under Article 430 of the Civil Code.

****Doctrine:****

- The Court reiterated the principle that procedural rules are tools for the attainment of justice and should not hinder it. Substantial justice should precede procedural technicalities.
- It upheld the property owner's inherent right to fence their property as an aspect of ownership.

****Class Notes:****

- ****Procedural Due Process:**** Requires that motions be properly notified to opposing parties but acknowledges courts' discretion to relax rules in the interest of justice.
- ****Article 430 of the Civil Code:**** Confers the right to fence or enclose one's property.
- ****Requirement for Liberal Construction of Procedural Rules:**** Courts may forgo strict procedural adherence to ensure cases are decided on their merits, promoting substantive justice over procedural imperfections.

****Historical Background:****

The case reflects a property dispute between two corporate entities, emerging from transactions involving subdivided lots originally owned by FHDI. It underscores the complexities associated with land ownership and development in urban settings, particularly when previous arrangements or projects influence subsequent property rights and development plans. Through its decision, the Supreme Court underscored the importance of property rights and the primacy of substantive justice over procedural lapses, setting a precedent for similar future disputes.