Hofer et al v. Old Navy Inc. et al Doc. 65 Att. 8

Case 4:05-cv-40170-FDS Document 65-9 Filed 02/16/2007 Page 1 of 20

EXHIBIT 8

| 1 | IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE UNITED STATES |
|----|---|
| 2 | FOR THE DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS |
| 3 | |
| 4 | STEPHANIE HOFER and DOUGLAS HOFER, |
| 5 | Plaintiffs, |
| 6 | vs. Case No. 05-40170 |
| 7 | THE GAP, INC., EXPEDIA, INC., |
| 8 | and TURTLE BEACH TOWERS, |
| 9 | Defendants. |
| 10 | |
| 11 | |
| 12 | |
| 13 | The Videotaped Deposition of FAYLIN MILLER, |
| 14 | Taken at Turtle Beach Towers, Main Street, |
| 15 | Ocho Rios, St. Ann, Jamaica, W.I., |
| 16 | Commencing at 10:02 a.m., |
| 17 | Monday, August 21, 2006, |
| 18 | Before Rebecca J. Callow, CSR-5228, RPR. |
| 19 | |
| 20 | |
| 21 | |
| 22 | |
| 23 | |
| 24 | |
| 25 | |
| I | |



| ı | 1 | |
|---|----|--|
| | 1 | APPEARANCES: |
| | 2 | |
| | 3 | STEPHEN J. KUZMA |
| | 4 | Stephen Kuzma Law Office |
| | 5 | 75 Federal Street |
| | 6 | Suite 17 |
| | 7 | Boston, Massachusetts 02110 |
| | 8 | (617) 338-3020 |
| | 9 | Appearing on behalf of the Plaintiffs. |
| | 10 | |
| | 11 | INDIA L. MINCHOFF |
| | 12 | Russo & Minchoff |
| | 13 | 123 Boston Street |
| | 14 | Boston, Massachusetts 02125 |
| | 15 | (617) 740-7340 |
| | 16 | Appearing on behalf of the Plaintiffs. |
| | 17 | |
| | 18 | SCOTT D. FERINGA |
| | 19 | Sullivan, Ward, Asher & Patton, P.C. |
| | 20 | 25800 Northwestern Highway |
| | 21 | Suite 1000 |
| | 22 | Southfield, Michigan 48037 |
| | 23 | (248) 746-0700 |
| | 24 | Appearing on behalf of the Gap, Inc. |
| | 25 | |
| | | |



| 1 | THOMAS T. REITH |
|----|--------------------------------------|
| 2 | Burns & Levinson, L.L.P. |
| 3 | 125 Summer Street |
| 4 | Boston, Massachusetts 02110 |
| 5 | (617) 345-3000 |
| 6 | Appearing on behalf of Expedia, Inc. |
| 7 | |
| 8 | ALSO PRESENT: |
| 9 | Lynsey Williams - Video Technician |
| 10 | |
| 11 | |
| 12 | |
| 13 | . |
| 14 | |
| 15 | |
| 16 | |
| 17 | |
| 18 | |
| 19 | |
| 20 | |
| 21 | |
| 22 | |
| 23 | |
| 24 | |
| 25 | |
| | |



| 1 | Ocho Rios, St. Ann, Jamaica, W.I., |
|----|---|
| 2 | Monday, August 21, 2006 |
| 3 | 10:02 a.m. |
| 4 | |
| 5 | MARKED BY THE REPORTER: |
| 6 | DEPOSITION EXHIBIT NUMBERS 1-7 |
| 7 | 10:02 a.m. |
| 8 | VIDEO TECHNICIAN: We are now on the record. |
| 9 | This is the videotape deposition of Fay Miller being |
| 10 | taken on Monday August 21st, 2006. The time is now |
| 11 | 10:02 and 11 seconds a.m. We are located at the |
| 12 | Turtle Beach Towers in Ocho Rios Jamaica. This |
| 13 | deposition is being taken on behalf of the defendants |
| 14 | in the matter of Stephanie Hofer and Douglas Hofer |
| 15 | versus The Gap, Incorporated; Expedia, Incorporated; |
| 16 | and Turtle Beach Towers. This case number 05-40170 |
| 17 | FDS. This matter is being held in the United States |
| 18 | District Court for the District of Massachusetts. |
| 19 | My name is Lynsey Williams, video |
| 20 | technician. Will the court reporter swear in the |
| 21 | witness and the attorneys briefly identify themselves |
| 22 | for the record, please? |
| 23 | FAYLIN MILLER, |
| 24 | was thereupon called as a witness herein, and after |
| 25 | having first been duly sworn to testify to the truth, |



| 1 | | the whole truth and nothing but the truth, was |
|----|----|--|
| 2 | | examined and testified as follows: |
| 3 | | MR. FERINGA: Scott Feringa appearing on |
| 4 | | behalf of The Gap. |
| 5 | | MR. REITH: Thomas Reith on behalf of |
| 6 | | Expedia, Inc. |
| 7 | | MS. MINCHOFF: India Minchoff for the |
| 8 | | plaintiffs. |
| 9 | | MR. KUZMA: Steven Kuzma for the plaintiff, |
| 10 | | Stephanie Hofer. |
| 11 | | MR. FERINGA: Good morning, Ms. Miller. |
| 12 | Α. | Morning. |
| 13 | | MR. FERINGA: Let the record reflect this |
| 14 | | deposition is being taken pursuant to Notice and may |
| 15 | | be used for all purposes as contemplated by the |
| 16 | | Federal Rules of Civil Procedure and the Federal Rules |
| 17 | | of Evidence. |
| 18 | | MR. KUZMA: Before we begin, I just want to |
| 19 | | make a statement that I don't believe consular |
| 20 | | authority has been granted in the case, and we'd |
| 21 | | object to the taking of the deposition on that ground. |
| 22 | | MR. FERINGA: We've received consular |
| 23 | | authority from the Consulate of Jamaica. |
| 24 | | MR. KUZMA: Okay. I'd like to see it. |
| 25 | | That's all I need. |
| ł | | |



| 1 | |
|----|--|
| 1 | MR. FERINGA: I think we've provided that |
| 2 | with the motion. You saw that letter from the |
| 3 | Consulate, from Jamaica. |
| 4 | MR. KUZMA: If that's so, I waive my |
| 5 | objection. |
| 6 | MR. FERINGA: Let's go off the record. |
| 7 | Somebody's at the door. |
| 8 | VIDEO TECHNICIAN: We are going off the |
| 9 | record. The time is 10:04 and 7 seconds a.m. |
| 10 | (Discussion off the record at 10:04 a.m.) |
| 11 | (Back on the record at 10:05 a.m.) |
| 12 | VIDEO TECHNICIAN: Back on the record. The |
| 13 | time is 10:05 and 37 seconds a.m. |
| 14 | MR. FERINGA: Just back on the record in |
| 15 | response to Mr. Kuzma's objection, we had supplied |
| 16 | with a petition to the Court as Exhibit D, a letter |
| 17 | that was faxed to us from the Embassy of Jamaica on 27 |
| 18 | July 2006 from Mr. Cythe, C-y-e-t-h, Denton, first |
| 19 | secretary/consul, advising that the Embassy that |
| 20 | Jamaica has no objection to the taking of the |
| 21 | depositions here. So we'll use that as part of the |
| 22 | record. |
| 23 | EXAMINATION |
| 24 | BY MR. FERINGA: |
| 25 | Q. Can you give us your full name, please? |
| | |



- 1 A. I'm Faylin, F-a-y-l-i-n. Miller, M-i-l-l-e-r.
- 2 Q. Mrs. Miller, we were introduced before we started this
- deposition. My name is Scott Feringa. I'm going to
- 4 be asking you some questions today. The ladies here
- 5 will be taking down everything that we say.
- 6 A. Sure.
- 7 Q. Additionally, it's a fairly artificial way of talking,
- because two of us can't talk at the same time. That
- 9 way, if we talk at the same time, our court reporter
- will not be able to take us down both together. So if
- 11 you can wait until I'm finished and I'll wait until
- 12 you're finished, that will be translated well on our
- 13 record then, please.
- 14 A. Okay.
- 15 Q. Additionally, Mrs. Miller, if you have any questions
- about what I have asked you, if I'm unclear in any
- way, please tell me and I'll be more than happy to
- 18 rephrase the question. All right, ma'am?
- 19 A. Sure.
- 20 Q. Mrs. Miller, we're at the Turtle Beach Towers in Ocho
- 21 Rios, Jamaica. Is that correct?
- 22 A. Yes, we are.
- 23 Q. And, Mrs. Miller, what is your position here?
- 24 A. I'm general manager for the apartments.
- 25 Q. And how long have you been general manager for the



- 1 Q. The towers that we're involved in, how many towers are
- 2 there?
- 3 A. There are four towers.
- 4 Q. And then where they first built? Do you know?
- 5 A. Oh, they are, I would say, 40 years old.
- 6 Q. The reception area, is that at Tower Number 4?
- 7 A. It is.
- 8 Q. And is that the location where guests actually check
- 9 in?
- 10 A. Yes. That's right.
- 11 Q. I'm going to show you what we have marked as Exhibit
- 12 Number 1. And this a photograph of Tower 4 and the
- reception area. This is the same photograph that has
- 14 been used at the deposition of Ms. LaBelle and
- 15 Mrs. Hofer.
- MR. FERINGA: Counsel?
- MR. KUZMA: I object to the form.
- 18 BY MR. FERINGA:
- 19 Q. Is this is a photograph of Tower Number 4 and the
- 20 reception area?
- 21 A. Yes, it is.
- MR. KUZMA: Objection.
- 23 BY MR. FERINGA:
- 24 Q. And will you hold that up for the camera? Now, with
- respect to that photograph, where is the reception



- 1 area located?
- 2 A. Inside the lobby. Inside here. Open the door and you
- 3 go in. It's right in there.
- 4 Q. And in March of 2004, was the reception area in that
- 5 same location?
- 6 A. That's never changed for 30 years.
- 7 Q. Okay. So the photograph that --
- 8 MR. KUZMA: Objection. Move to strike.
- 9 BY MR. FERINGA:
- 10 Q. So the photograph that you have in front of you is an
- 11 accurate representation of how the property looked in
- 12 March of 2004?
- 13 A. Exactly.
- MR. KUZMA: Objection to the form.
- 15 BY MR. FERINGA:
- 16 Q. Now you can answer.
- 17 A. Exactly.
- 18 Q. Now, how many steps lead up to the landing?
- 19 A. Three.
- 20 Q. If you look in the picture.
- 21 A. One, two. Two.
- 22 Q. Two. And if you show that the -- to all of us,
- 23 please.
- 24 The doors -- if you can keep that photograph
- up, Mrs. Miller, if you could. The doors, is there a



- 1 single door or two doors?
- 2 A. Two doors.
- 3 Q. And has it always been two doors?
- 4 A. Always been two doors.
- 5 Q. There is in the right side of that photograph a bench.
- 6 You're familiar with that bench?
- 7 A. Yes, I do.
- 8 Q. How long has that bench been there?
- 9 A. For 20, 30 years. 20 years.
- 10 Q. As long as you can --
- 11 A. -- can remember, yes.
- 12 Q. And in back of that bench, what is there?
- 13 A. A turtle pond.
- 14 Q. How long has that turtle bond pond been there?
- 15 A. It has been there the same, about 20 years.
- 16 Q. Is there any other turtle pond on the property of
- 17 Turtle Beach Towers?
- 18 A. No. No. Never been.
- 19 Q. And on March 18, was this the same -- strike that.
- On March 18, was there any difference in the
- 21 turtle pond as --
- 22 A. No.
- MR. KUZMA: Objection.
- 24 BY MR. FERINGA:
- 25 Q. Was there any difference in the turtle pond?



- 1 Exhibit Number 4. Can you tell us what that
- photograph is?
- 3 A. That's the front desk area.
- 4 Q. And does it show any evidence of a turtle pond?
- 5 A. Yes. Right here.
- 6 Q. Can you show it to the members of the jury?
- 7 So what you're pointing to with your finger
- 8 is the turtle pond.
- 9 A. The turtle pond. Correct.
- 10 Q. Thank you.
- 11 MR. REITH: If you don't mind me asking,
- 12 Scott.
- If you don't mind, Ms. Miller, if you can
- 14 speak up just a little bit.
- 15 A. Okay.
- MR. REITH: We want to make sure we get it.
- My hearing must be shot from the flight, so...
- 18 A. Okay.
- MR. REITH: Thank you.
- 20 BY MR. FERINGA:
- 21 Q. And I'm just going to show you what we've marked as
- 22 Exhibit Number 5, and ask whether you can identify
- that photograph as well.
- 24 A. That's the turtle pond.
- 25 Q. And is this the -- was this turtle pond the same as it



- 1 was in 2004?
- 2 A. It is.
- 3 Q. Thank you.
- 4 A. It was.
- 5 Q. I'm going to show you what has been marked at a
- 6 previous deposition as Hofer Exhibit Number 5, and
- 7 it's a drawing that Ms. Hofer made in her deposition
- in March -- I mean, on June 29, 2006, and purported to
- 9 be the layout of the lobby and turtle pond area.
- 10 A. There was not two turtle ponds, just one.
- 11 Q. And my question is --
- MR. KUZMA: I move to strike.
- 13 BY MR. FERINGA:
- 14 Q. The question I have, Mrs. Miller, is is this an
- 15 accurate representation of what the property was like
- on March 18, 2004?
- 17 A. No. It hasn't been changed from that.
- 18 Q. Can you --
- 19 A. No. It has not been changed. This is not. This is
- saying one, two, three, steps there, not four steps.
- This is saying two turtle ponds, we only had one
- 22 turtle pond.
- 23 Q. And in terms of the door area, if it has been
- represented by Ms. Hofer that that door was a single
- 25 glass door, was that --



- 1 Q. I'm sorry?
- 2 A. Which of them?
- 3 Q. The photographs that you have in your left hand, do
- 4 you still have those that he showed you? You still
- 5 have them?
- 6 A. Yes. Yes, I do.
- 7 Q. Okay. How long have you worked here?
- 8 A. For 30 years.
- 9 Q. 30 years. And fair to say that you've walked up and
- 10 down those stairs that we see in those photographs --
- 11 A. Every day.
- 12 Q. -- thousands of times?
- 13 A. Every day of the week. I'm here seven days of the
- 14 week.
- 15 Q. So you've walked up and down those --
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. -- and you're very familiar with those stairs and the
- 18 entryway?
- 19 A. Yes, I am.
- 20 Q. When Mr. Feringa asked you how many steps lead up to
- 21 the landing, you first said three steps. Correct?
- 22 A. Yes, but I have -- yes, but --
- 23 Q. You did say three. Right?
- 24 A. Yes, I did say three.
- 25 Q. Okay. And then you changed your answer to two.



- 1 Correct?
- 2 A. I know it's two, but, you know, walking up, three.
- 3 Yes.
- 4 Q. So you changed your answer from three steps to two.
- 5 Correct?
- 6 A. Uh-huh. Yes.
- 7 Q. And, again, it's fair to say that you're very familiar
- 8 with --
- 9 A. Yes, I am.
- 10 Q. -- those stairs?
- 11 A. Yes, I am.
- 12 Q. All right. And you're very familiar with the
- 13 reception --
- 14 A. Yes, I am.
- 15 Q. -- area beyond those stairs?
- 16 A. Yes.
- 17 Q. And as to enter the lobby, there's a reception desk on
- the left-hand side of the lobby. Correct?
- 19 A. Yes.
- 20 Q. And on the right-hand side of the lobby there's seats?
- 21 A. Yes.
- 22 Q. From the vantage point behind the reception desk, is
- it fair to say that you can't see the turtle pond
- 24 which is shown in those photographs?
- 25 A. No. But there's a glass with the mirror there, or



- picture on the wall. You can stand at that desk and
- 2 you see anybody coming from that angle.
- 3 Q. All right. My question is not whether you can see
- anyone coming from that angle, but can you see the
- 5 turtle pond from behind the reception desk through
- 6 that mirror down below. Can you see it?
- 7 A. No. No.
- 8 Q. Thank you. Is it fair to say, Ms. Miller, that you
- 9 try to maintain a safe resort?
- 10 A. Yes, I do.
- 11 Q. And you feel that you do maintain a safe resort?
- 12 A. Yes, I do.
- 13 Q. So if any stairs were chipped, that would not be a
- 14 safe condition. Correct?
- 15 A. Right.
- 16 Q. You would agree with that?
- 17 A. I would.
- 18 Q. You've stated to counsel that you conducted an
- 19 investigation. Correct?
- 20 A. Yes, I did.
- 21 Q. How many times over the course of your employment
- 22 history here have you conducted an investigation
- regarding an accident which occurred here?
- 24 A. We've not had an accident. This is the first major
- 25 report we have.



- 1 Q. This is the first in 28 years?
- 2 A. Yes. Uh-huh.
- 3 Q. So is it fair --
- 4 A. You will have like little things like in the room like
- 5 they bump their feet beet on the table, they bounce
- 6 off the glass of the table or something. But away
- from that, this is the biggest major one I've ever
- 8 had.
- 9 Q. All right. Is it fair to say that based upon your
- 10 testimony anyway that this was the first accident of
- 11 this type --
- 12 A. Yes.
- 13 Q. -- that this is the first investigation that you've
- 14 conducted. Correct?
- 15 A. No. I have like daily reports that I have to make, if
- 16 something happened. Like, as I said, if a glass is
- 17 broken, if somebody walk like in the glass door or
- something like that, then I have to make a report.
- 19 Q. I specifically asked you whether this is your first
- 20 investigation. Do you understand me?
- 21 A. Um-hmm.
- 22 Q. "Yes"?
- 23 A. No. I investigate other cases. Yes. Other cases I
- 24 have.
- 25 Q. But this is the first type of --



- 1 Q. Forgive me. How many years have you worked here?
- 2 A. About 28, 30 years.
- 3 Q. I know you answered it a couple times. I just want to
- 4 make sure I got it right. 28 or 30 years?
- 5 A. Yes.
- 6 Q. And in those 28 or 30 years, how many times has there
- 7 then an incident such as the one that Ms. Hofer argues
- 8 happened in the Turtle pond?
- 9 MR. KUZMA: Objection.
- 10 A. That the first one.
- 11 BY MR. REITH:
- 12 Q. That's the first one?
- 13 A. First one.
- 14 Q. That's the first time someone alleged that they fell
- into a turtle pond was this past -- this case?
- 16 A. Yes.
- MR. KUZMA: Objection.
- 18 Q. Is it fair to say that Expedia -- strike that.
- 19 Is it fair to say that no one from Expedia
- 20 has issued an inspection report about the turtle pond?
- 21 A. No.
- 22 Q. No one has?
- 23 A. No one has.
- 24 Q. Is it fair to say that no one from Expedia has asked
- you or anyone from your resort to fix anything with





