

MINUTES
BLOOMINGTON BUILDING BOARD OF APPEALS
REGULAR MEETING
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2013
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL
109 EAST OLIVE STREET, BLOOMINGTON, ILLINOIS

MEMBERS PRESENT: John Meek, Michael Raikes, John Weber, Jeremy Dodson, Larry Stevig, Edwin Neaves, Jeffrey Brown, Douglas Dodson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Barbara Page

OTHERS PRESENT: Mark Huber - Director, Planning and Code Enforcement;
Robert Coombs - Acting Secretary, Commercial Inspector;
Mike Alwes - Electrical Inspector; Bob Jeakins - HVAC Inspector;
Mike Conroy - Building Inspector; Kathryn Gruber - Building Inspector;

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Coombs called the meeting of the Building Board of Appeals to order 3:03 P.M.

ROLL CALL: A quorum was present.

MINUTES: There were none. This was the first meeting of this Board.

REGULAR AGENDA:

Mr. Huber began the meeting by inviting the Building Board of Appeals members to introduce themselves. The members proceeded to briefly describe their backgrounds and interest in being a part of this Board.

Mr. Huber thanked the members for their service in the creation of this multi-functional/jurisdictional board.

The Board was invited to provide nominations/volunteers for the election of a Chairperson. Mr. Meek was nominated for Chairman by Mr. D. Dodson with a second by Mr. Brown. All signified in favor with no opposition. Mr. Meek assumed the Chairman position.

Purpose and Operations: Mr. Huber noted the duties and responsibilities as approved by the City Council. All of the duties and responsibilities from the former committees which had been disbanded were combined into the new Building Board of Appeals.

The Building Safety Staff was introduced.

This Board, according to statute, will have at least two meetings a year not to be more than once a month. The next meetings are Tuesday, May 6, 2014 at 3.00 p.m. and Tuesday, November 4, 2014 at 3.00 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Case # BBA-1-13 City of Bloomington Staff requesting a recommendation to the City Council concerning the adoption of the 2012 International Code Council (ICC) family of codes. Specifically, the: IBC, International Building Code; IRC, International Residential Code; IFC, International Fire Code; IECC, International Energy Conservation Code; IMC, International Mechanical Code; IFGC, International Fuel Gas Code; In addition the Board is being asked to consider the NEC/2014, National Electrical Code.

Chairman Meek introduced the case and invited Mr. Huber to elaborate.

IRC. Mr. Huber referred to the packet of highlighted summary of changes. Mr. Huber commented on a few changes. The IRC and one major change to the code as written. The residential sprinkler requirements have been removed. With the sprinklers removed, a protection of floors is required as stated in section 501.3.

IECC. The City is going to adopt the IECC 2012 which the state already mandates with a uniformity of enforcement. Staff has entered into conversations with their counter-parts from Normal regarding the IECC 2012 enforcement across the division street in a uniform manner.

IFC. A couple of minor changes to the IFC have been included in the packet.

NEC. The focus was mostly on the expanded Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) use and Arc Fault Circuit Interrupter (AFCI) use. We attempt not to modify the code as they are embedded on a national level. We don't feel that we can change that much on a local level either, with the exception on the residential building and sprinkler area. Mr. Huber invited the board and public questions and discussion.

Chairman Meek invited questions from the board members. Mr. Neaves asked a procedural question regarding the next steps toward a recommendation for the city council. Mr. Huber encouraged keeping the code as a whole as much as possible. It makes it easier for staff to obtain training and provides uniformity for out of town contractors and designers coming into the area to do work. However, if the board feels strongly about a particular issue, we can push a recommendation.

Mr. Neaves entered into a ground fault location discussion. Mr. Alwes, electrical inspector, was invited to respond. He explained the history of the GFCI requirements for sump pumps, garage door openers, refrigerators and dish washers. He also explained the need to meet the intention of the code as well as the philosophy on addressing issues as they may arise.

Chairman Meek asked how to memorialize the decisions. Mr. Huber stated it's legitimate to revisit cases that may arise. Staff is trying to be practical with the Code; however, a builder is welcome to come to this board to express concern over issues which may arise.

Mr. Weber mentioned on-going Code change classes.

Mr. Stevig clarified, if NEC is accepted tonight we can address issues as they come forward. Mr. Huber sighted the GFCI requirement for sump pumps as an example of a Code requirement not working from a practical standpoint. The problem was brought before the electrical commission. A code change was instituted that waived the requirement. The process was a legitimate way to deal with a code section that was troublesome.

Mr. Stevig asked if the summary of changes included in the packet were unique to this location or just a summary of changes from 2009 to 2012. Mr. Huber stated the summary of changes Staff felt pertinent to this particular locale. For example, we would not take the hurricane wind requirements from the coast to apply to Illinois.

Mr. Stevig asked if the waiver for the GFCI of the sump pump would need to be spelled out. Mr. Huber stated the waiver has already been articulated with the 2011 addition and left the exemption in our local amendments. This board is voting on recommending the adoption of the 2012 codes and all of the local amendments would remain in force, unless there was specific action to remove them.

Chairman Meek stated Staff, Mr. Alwaes, addressed some of Mr. Neaves concerns. How were these concerns addressed and do we need to take some action today? Mr. Huber referred to an example of how the local authority addressed the GFCI requirement for the dishwasher. Mr. Alwes and his Normal counter-part, Rand Veerman, resolved this issue by placing the switch in the cabinet next to the dishwasher. Unless there is a specific issue or case, Mr. Huber suggested treating this recommendation as a whole package. The door is always open for modification or equivalencies.

IECC. The Energy Conservation Code is not modifiable as it is adopted and approved by the State. We are doing this more as equity of enforcement verses an attempt to adopt another code.

Chairman Meek reiterated Mr. Huber's comments to depend on the local Experts and Staff who have worked at resolving prior issues.

Chairman Meek invited the public comment. There were none.

Mr. Stevig requested an update on the residential sprinkler requirement. Mr. Huber stated the mandatory option has been in effect for two years. The only folks who have placed sprinklers into their homes have been Habitat for Humanity. They have been placing sprinklers into their homes before the code was adopted. It has been financially possible due to free labor and donations of materials.

Chairman Meek invited more comments. There were none.

Mr. Stevig approached the board regarding community resiliency with regard to the homes devastated by the recent tornados. If there would be an interested builder who might want to build a home more tornado resistant, would it be possible to encourage the public guidelines somehow? Maybe there would be something the city would be comfortable with in the guidelines.

Mr. Huber stated the Code is a minimum standard; however, the code has become more technical and detailed. If someone would come to staff about building a tornado shelter in their home, they would be pointed to the Code with the specifics. If one wanted to meet higher design criteria, maybe the city could give tax incentives or offer incentives to encourage the activity. This could be done with the fire protection sprinklers. Chairman Meek looks to this board to come forward with ideas on how to save lives.

Chairman Meek again invited public comments. No one spoke.

Chairman Meek invited a motion to accept the body of 2012 Code as presented. Mr. Neaves made the motion to accept the body of Codes as presented. The second was made by Mr. Weber. Chairman Meek invited any further discussion, seeing none, a vote was taken. All in favor signified by saying 'Aye'. None opposed. **Case # BBA-1-13** passed by a vote of eight (8) to zero (0).

Chairman Meek invited any other business to come before the board.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Meek invited a motion for adjournment. Mr. Raikes moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. J. Dodson seconded the motion which was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3.56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bob Coombs

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